

A  
COURSE  
OF  
LECTURES  
UPON THE  
Church Catechism,  
IN  
Four VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.  
*Upon the Preliminary Questions and Answers.*

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The Second Edition.

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By THOMAS BRAT, D.D.

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OXFORD:  
Printed by LEONARD LICHFIELD, for the  
AUTHOR. MDCXCVII.



COURSE  
OF  
LECTURES

UPON THE  
Church Catechism

TWO VOLUMES.

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By the Rev. Thomas Burgess, M.A.

The Second Edition.

By THOMAS BURGESS, D.D.

OXFORD:

Printed by LEONARD BISHOP, for the  
AUTHOR. MDCCXVII.

TO THE  
Right Reverend Father in GOD

WILLIAM,

LORD BISHOP of  
Cobentry and Litchfield.

Lord Almoner to the KING.

My Lord,

**H**AVING your Lordship's Commands for the Publication of these following Discourses, I have reason to hope my Readers will prove candid and favourable in their Censures, since they cannot but pay the greatest Deference to the Judgment of a Prelate, whom all the Learned, both at home and abroad, do unanimously rank amongst the greatest Divines, that this, or former Ages can glory in. But that I may not too much lessen that Esteem, which the judicious part of Mankind, at least, do justly bear to your Lordship, as the nicest Judge in Things of this Nature, by proclaiming to the World that

### The Epistle Dedicatory.

*Encouragement you have given to a Work, which no doubt will be found very defective: I am apt to believe, and am forward to own it, that it might be more your Approbation of the Design, than the Goodness of the Performance that has made your Lordship so exceedingly kind to it, and its Author. And indeed if ever there were a necessity of attempting any thing to promote Catechetical Instructions, there is now too sad an Occasion for it.*

*Some Years since we thought it sufficiently hard upon us, that we were put to the trouble of defending a Church, so excellently Constituted as ours is, by sustaining those slight Skimishes made only upon its Outworks: namely, against its Rites and Ceremonies (Solemnities I would rather call 'em) so wisely order'd for the more grave and solemn Administration of Divine Worship, and for the better Edification of the Souls of Men. But alas the Enemy has now enter'd through our Breaches into the very heart of our City (as St. Austin calls the Church of God.) And as if there were an Universal Conspiracy made at this time against it, All the Grand and Fundamental Articles, both of Natural and Revealed Religion, are now either most furiously storm'd by Atheists, Deists, and Socinians on the one hand, or secretly and dangerously undermined by Enthusiasts and Antinomians on the other. And if the next Generation should grow worse in its Principles and Morals than the present, what Vengeance from Heaven, even to the removing of our Candlestick, may we not fear? But especially, what Indignation from God may not we of the Clergy dread, should we suffer the Youth of our Nation to go abroad  
into*



### The Epistle Dedicatory.

into the World, without having first given 'em those Religious Impressions by good Principles, as will guard 'em from the danger thereof; and, especially, without having first prepossess'd the Minds of such, with a deep Tincture of Divine Knowledge, as are likely to be the Leading Men in their Countries; and yet by a fatal mistake in Education, are generally brought up in those Undisciplin'd Societies, amongst whom the Oracles of false and pretended Reason are more universally read, and more highly applauded, than the Liberty Oracles of Divine Revelation.

I know how deeply sensible your Lordship is of the growing Infidelity and Heterodoxy of this Age; and how much it is your Opinion, that a constant Course of Catechising our Youth in the Fundamental Principles of Christianity, is the only means that can effectually obviate and Cure those Great and prevailing Evils. And if what I have here offered to the Publick, may be at all serviceable to any of my Brethren, in affording some useful Materials for their own Compositions of this kind, and in assisting any of 'em in their Method, I have my End, and shall therein in some measure answer, I presume, your Lordship's Design; who, out of a pious Zeal to have this Work of Catechising universally set forwards by every Individual Minister in your Diocess, would have the way so plain'd, that we might all proceed therein without interruption.

And sure where the Authoritative Injunctions of Your great Father and Governor of our Church, are join'd with such an unparalell'd Industry in the discharge



### The Epistle Dedicatory.

charge of all the most Important and difficult Duties of the Episcopal Care; it is impossible for us, who are under the Influence of your Power and Example, to be Remiss in that which is the very principal part of Ministerial Instruction incumbent upon us. For if we no sooner saw your Lordship entring upon that Diocess, to which you were Translated so Happily to us (though so disadvantageously to your own Fortunes) but we saw you apply your self with the utmost Vigour to the Business of it, in Visiting not only your Clergy, but Cathedral, Schools, and Hospitals. If in your Lordship's primary Visitation we heard such a Learned Scriptural Proof of the **JUS DIVINUM** of the **THREE DISTINCT ORDERS**, (and what Evidence of that Nature is not to be expected from one so Mighty in the Holy Scriptures) as cannot but silence all Adversaries, and all the Learned of our Nation would be glad to see made publick. If we also saw at the same time that Venerable Ordinance of Confirmation (even amongst those vast Crowds that came to it, and with so great a Fatigue to your self) administer'd with a particular Application of the stipulatory part, to every Individual Person, that was duly attested to be sufficiently Qualified; and with that Order, Gravity, and Solemnity, which rais'd in all, who were present, that Value for it, which is due to it: If against every **EMBER** we see those wise Precautions used, with Reference to the Candidates for Holy Orders, as would effectually prevent the admission of Persons unworthy, upon the account of any Immorality, or will wholly lay the Guilt at the Doors of those who are

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back-

### The Epistle Dedicatory.

backward to Inform their Church-Governors of the Miscarriages they know, in order to their Correction and Remedy; and yet are most apt to raise their Outcries against the Scandals of the Clergy: And if also in the Probation of those who are permitted to stand Candidates, there is constantly such a Treasury of Sacred Learning open'd to 'em in your Explications of Holy Writ, as renders those Examinations one of the most learned and useful Theological Exercises that this Age does know; and is alone sufficient to render those in a good measure Qualified with Scriptural Knowledge, who come not thereto altogether prepar'd before-hand. And indeed, if agreeably to your Lordship's so useful Examinations, those who have the Happiness to be conversant with you in your Studies, do always see you searching the Scriptures, and do scarcely ever find you without the Holy Bible before you; (though one would think the sacred Page need be no more turn'd over by one, who seems to have it wholly by heart already, both in our own and all the Learned Languages.) If farther yet we have seen your Lordship, by a Method equally worthy to be admired and imitated, in so short time, to have got such an exact Knowledge of a numerous Clergy, that from the chiefest Rector to the meanest Curate, our Abilities, Lives, and Ministerial Performances, seem not to be better known to our nearest Neighbours, than to your self; and our Miscarriages and Neglects of Duty in the remotest part of your Diocese, may almost as soon escape the Reproaches of our own Consciences, as your Lordship's Notice and Animadversion: If in a word such is your Lordship's Vigilance through all the  
Parts

### The Epistle Dedicatory.

Parts of a very large Diocess, as is alone sufficient to confute those Voluminous Libels which were wrote some Years since against **DIOCESAN EPISCOPACY**, as if an exact Discipline were not practicable therein: If I say, such an Authority will not awe us, nor such an Example of Pastoral Care will not animate us to discharge, as all the other, so especially such an indispensably necessary a part of our Ministerial Function as Catechising (particularly at this Juncture) undoubtedly is, this were enough to provoke Heaven to snatch from us the vast Benefit of such a Paternal Government: Which Blessing that God may however continue to this Church, as it is heartily desired by all that know your Lordship, (and are good enough themselves justly to value the two best Things in the World, an unparallell'd Degree of Learning join'd with an equal measure of the most ardent Piety) so particularly it is the most earnest and devout Prayers to God, of

My LORD,

Your Lordship's Most Obliged

Most Obedient, and Most

Dutiful Son and Servant

T. B.

THE



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THE  
PREFACE  
TO THE  
READER.

**H**AVING a Design, if God permit, and if I shall find this present performance to be Candidly received, to publish a Discourse upon the **Nature and Extent of Ministerial, more particularly of Catechetical Instruction**, which in the Nature of it, I think, would be the most proper Preface to this Work; but is a Porch too large to be prefix'd to one single Wing of the Building; I shall only at present Advertise my Reader of two Particulars, relating to this First Volume of my Lectures; namely,

1. Whereas I propos'd, Lecture the Fourth, in the Division of the Subject-Matter contained in these Preliminary Questions and Answers, to treat both upon Divine Grace and of Prayer, as they are the means to enable us to perform our part of the Covenant; and also to explain the Doctrine, and to justify the Thing it self of **Infant-Baptism**, or the admitting of Persons into Covenant in the time of Infancy; as also the Use of **Godfathers** and **Godmothers** therein, I was advis'd by some Learned Men to referr those four last Points, and the Lectures upon 'em, rather to the latter end of the Catechism; the two former to be treated upon, when I come to the **Lord's Prayer**, and the Question which leads to it; the two latter when I shall come to the Doctrine of the **Sacraments**,



*The Preface.*

where my Discourses upon those Subjects will be founded upon Questions and Answers more directly leading thereunto. And as to the Subject of **Renouncing the World, the Flesh, and the Devil**, it was thought it might be of good Use to enlarge upon that, there being nothing of vaster Concernment, especially to Youth, than a plain and practical discovery of those various Temptations which will arise from all these our Spiritual Adversaries, and are likely to assault them above others. And because this Condition in our Covenant with God, of Renouncing the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, does not again recur in any part of the Catechism to be more particularly handled, as the others of Faith and Obedience do; for these Reasons it is, that my Exposition of that Point has run out into a length so much disproportionable to the rest, insomuch that that part takes up half the Book.

2. That which in the next place I am to account for, is the 23<sup>d</sup>. Lecture; which is an Epitome of a Book, titl'd the **Measures of Christian Obedience**, a Work, I presume, both well-known and esteem'd. That Reverend Author, had, in my Opinion, given so full a state of the Condition of our Coveeant, viz. Evangelical Obedience; that I thought I should do an Injury to my *Catechumen*, should I pass it by, and give him a worse, and more imperfect one of my own. Whether it would have been easier to me to contract that Discourse, than to make a new state of the Point, such as I might call my own, I cannot readily guess; but if it was, I hope some allowance will be given for taking one such Rest as this may appear to be, since in the whole Scheme of Doctrine upon these **Preliminary Questions and Answers**, I have been forc'd to tread in something an unbeaten Path.

And now with my earnest Prayers to God, that he would give his Blessing to what is herein no otherwise than honestly design'd, I shall only at present intreat the candid Reader, to put a favourable Construction upon what has been here offer'd him, by one who is too sensible of his own Insufficiencies, to be pertinacious in maintaining any thing against

# The Preface.

gainst the sense of his Superiors; but especially who is Religiously careful to advance nothing contrary to the Doctrine of our Church: Which that I might not do, I have, and shall all along endeavour to take in as much as I can, both of Matter and Expression from its Established Forms and Offices.

## ERRATA.

Pag. 19. l. 1. read Tenets. p. 28. l. 22. after and add shall. p. 40. l. 21. r. Supp. l. 49. after Represented add as. p. 69. l. 40. r. subdue. p. 79. l. 34. after nor dele only. p. 82. l. 18. f. washing r. trashing. p. 83. l. 1. f. certainly r. Certainty. p. 88. l. 25. f. wor- shipped r. worship. p. 124. l. 3. aft. according r. to. p. 145. l. 51. f. feet r. feet. p. 153. l. 16. aft. which r. if. p. 157. l. 14. f. banish'd r. debauch'd. p. 159. l. 48. aft. therewith a full Period. l. 49. ends with a; p. 164. in the Margin r. Augus. p. 178. l. 20. f. r. are. p. 181. l. 4. aft. like r. concerning. p. 182. l. 28. f. Bards r. Bawds. p. 183. l. 33. aft. Old r. or. p. 184. l. 30. aft. are r. there of. our. p. 185. l. 52. aft. mind r. it. p. 193. l. 9. dele too. p. 206. l. 27. aft. failures r. are. l. 41. aft. insinuating, f. of r. that. p. 211. l. 47. aft. be. r. the. p. 218. l. 33. aft. Age f. on. r. in. p. 225. l. 28. aft. Flesh r. 3. What by ALL the sin- ful Lusts of the Flesh. p. 240. l. 46. f. weary r. wary. p. 159. l. 17. aft. and. f. that r. first. p. 262. l. 8. aft. such, f. which r. as. p. 27 l. 25. f. relish r. wish. p. 276. l. 3. aft. First r. As to. p. 277. l. 2. aft. of r. a. l. 11. f. appear r. appears. p. 278. l. 36. aft. So. dele and. p. 285. l. 47. aft. that. f. the r. if. p. 286. l. 42. f. Mens r. Men. l. 47. f. groping r. groping. p. 290. l. 52. aft. God r. By. p. 294. l. 12. f. they r. our. p. 303. f. brak r. break.

## A C A T E C H I S M;

That is to say, *An Instruction to be learned of every Person, before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop.*

Quest. **W**hat is your Name?

Ans. N. or M.

Quest. Who gave you this Name?

Ans. By Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism, wherein I was made a Member of Christ, the Church of God, and an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Quest. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?

Ans. They did promise and vow three things in my Name. First, That I should renounce the Devil, and all his works, the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Secondly, That I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And Thirdly, That I should keep God's holy Will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my Life.

Quest. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and do as they have promised for thee?

Ans. Yes verily; and by God's help, so I will. And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my lives end.

THE



# THE First Lecture.

A Catechism, that is to say, an Instruction to be Learned of every Person, before he be brought to be Confirmed by the Bishop.

**T**HIS is the Title of your Catechism, which you are now learning; and before I proceed to discourse on the Catechism it self, I thought it proper, from these Words, to define what a Catechism means, and to let you know the Benefit and Use of Catechizing.

As for the Word *κατηχίζω*, to Catechize, it is often met with in the Holy Scriptures, particularly *Luk. 1. 4.* where it is taken in the self-same sense we now use it, wherein it does import a more General Instruction in those Christian Truths, which are afterwards to be more particularly and distinctly learnt by us; for so *St. Luke* Dedicated his Gospel to *Theophilus*, tells him *Chap. 1. ver. 3, 4.* *That it seemed good to him, having had perfect knowledge of all those things from the very first, to write them in order to him, that he might know the certainty, or have a more full and particular Understanding of those things wherein he had been before Catechized, (for so it is in the very Letter of the Greek) that is taught only in General to prepare him for Baptism.*

*The Meaning of the Word Catechize.*  
Serius loci q. d. ut ea quæ olim Catechizatus vix voce didicisti nunc plenius ac certius cognoscas. Euseb. in loc.

*Hesychius*, a Learned Grammarian, does give the meaning of this word Catechize, by another which signifies to Build; and this does intimate to us the Matter of which a Catechism must consist, *viz.* Of the main and fundamental Points of Religion, such as are fittest to build up a firm and unshaken Christian withal.

Lastly, It is deriv'd from *κατηχίζω*, which signifies an inculcating and sounding often in the Ear of the Learner, the Principles to be imbibed and fixed in his Mind and Memory. So the Heathens, and so the Christians used the Word.

And this may suffice for the Importance of the Word, which I thought might not be improper to Note, because it gives so much Light into the Meaning of the Thing, and the Nature of a Catechism, which I shall therefore Define as follows, taking the Title now read, with some Explanatory Additions, for the Text upon which I shall Comment.

A Catechism is a general Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of the Christian Religion, necessary to be Learnt of every Person in order to his Confirmation; or the solemn Renewing of his Baptism.

*The Definition of a Catechism.*

A

tismal



tifmal Vow and Covenant with God, and the receiving Benefit by the Bishop's Blessing, Prayers, and Laying on of Hands. In which Definition you are told,

First, As to the Matter of which a Catechism is to consist: *It is a General Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of the Christian Religion.*

Secondly, As to the Persons to be so Instructed: *It is necessary to be Learnt of every Person.*

Thirdly, As to the End of a Catechism: It is necessary to be Learnt of every Person *in order to his Confirmation, or the solemn Renewing of his Baptismal Covenant and Vow before the Bishop, and the receiving Benefit by the Bishop's Blessing, Prayers, and Laying on of Hands.* Of all which Particulars I shall discourse to you in their Order.

And First, As to the Matter of which a Catechism is to consist: *It is a General Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of the Christian Religion.*

Christian Religion, What?

Christian Religion is out of Christian Principles to live an Holy, Good Life; and together therewith to depend upon the Mediation of Christ with the Father for us, that our imperfect Righteousness may be graciously accepted to our Justification.

I.  
A Moral  
good Life an  
Essential part  
of Christian-  
nity.

That Morality, or a good Life, is a necessary and essential Part of Christianity, is expressly affirm'd by St. James, 1. 27. where he tells us, That *Pure Religion and undefiled, before God and the Father* (or such as God the Father will accept) *is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their afflictions, and to keep one self unspotted from the world.* Many seem to place it in little less than Morality; but it is the Life and Soul of all Religion, as in respect of God, to Love, Honour, and to Obey him; to Trust in him, and to Resign one self to him; to Worship him, and to be Devoutly given: So in respect of our Neighbour, to be Just and Charitable; and particularly, and especially to Relieve those that are in Distress: And Lastly, as to our selves, to govern our Affections, to subdue our Passions, to mortify our Lusts, and to moderate our Desires: In a word, To keep the Heart and Life clean from the Defilements of Sin. In this, I say, consists One main Part of Religion, in abstaining from all Sin and Wickedness, and in a constant and steady Performance of all the Parts of Vertue and Holiness.

This, I am sure, is a main Part of the Christian Religion, the Religion that our Saviour came to Plant amongst Men, for this St. Paul assures us, Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* He appeared teaching us to deny all Ungodliness; and he gave himself for us to redeem us from all Iniquity. Hitherto indeed tended all he said, all he did, and all he suffer'd. This was the Design of his excellent Sermons and Discourses, of his most admirable Example and Life, and of his Death and Sufferings, to Root out of the Lives of Men whatsoever is Sinful and Wicked, and to Implant in its stead all the Parts of Vertue and Goodness.

But

# Lect. I. The Nature of a Catechism.

3

But Secondly, It is not enough to make a Man a good Christian, that he live a strict and unblamable Life; but it is moreover necessary to render him such, that he act Virtuously upon Christian Principles: Both indeed are necessary to the constituting a Man a true Christian. The most regular Life that can be, except it be Acted upon Christian Principles, is but meer Morality at the best; as the most Orthodox Belief that is, if it be Barren in good Works, is but a dead Faith: Thus Temperance may be observ'd because of our Health, and plain and punctual Dealing by the Men of Trade, because of their Interest. Men may Fast and Pray out of Hypocrisy, and to appear Good to others; and may distribute large Alms to gain the Applause of Men, as you may see *Mat. 6. 2, 5.* And indeed considering that *Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8.* And since of the Christian Religion it may be said, that *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;* Men may lead very blameless Lives in all respects, because of the Advantage and Tranquility of Mind, that arises meerly from a regular and orderly Conversation: But all this will be accounted by God to fall far short of the Christian Religion, and will entitle the Man to no Reward in Heaven, that acts upon no better Reasons nor Motives than these: *Verily I say unto you they have their reward, says our Saviour, Mat. 2. 6.*

II.  
To Act Vir-  
tuously upon  
Christian  
Principles.

Nay, He that lives an orderly, good, moral Life upon the Belief only that there is a God, that his Providence and Care is extended over us, that our Souls shall never Dye, but are capable of, and shall receive Rewards or Punishments in another world, can be only said to be so far Religious, as the good Moral Heathens were, who Believ'd and Acted upon the Principles of Natural Religion only; and who *having no other Law did by Nature the things contain'd in the Law, Rom. 2. 14.* But to constitute a Man truly Religious, and to denominate his Religion the Christian Religion, it is farther necessary, that he moreover Act upon Christian Principles, such as not the Light of Nature only, but the Gospel of our Saviour does reveal unto us, for *in the day when he shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, it will be, St. Paul tells us, according to his Gospel, Rom. 2. 16.* And so main a part in his Gospel were the Principles of reveal'd Religion, that he told the *Corinthians, he determined not to know any thing amongst them save Jesus Christ, and him Crucified, 1 Cor. 2. 2.* that is, the Means and Methods of our Salvation by a Crucified Saviour (which can be known only by Revelation) he was resolv'd should be so much the Subject of his Preaching amongst them, that they might almost conclude he himself knew nothing else, and did not much care whether they did also. Thus the Christian Religion you see, is out of Christian Principles to lead an holy, good Life.

Nor Thirdly, Is it enough to render the Religion of us Christians compleat, that by the force of good Christian Principles we lead good Lives; but to together therewith, we must depend upon the Mediation of Christ with the Father for us, that our imperfect Righteousness may be graciously accepted to our Justification. For alas! the best of us all must consider this, that when we have done all that is commanded us, we are but *unprofitable servants, Luk. 17. 10.* But alas! the best of us all do exceedingly fail in doing all that is com-  
manded necessary.

III.

Dependance  
upon the Me-  
diation of  
Christ, that  
our imperfect  
Righteousness  
may be accep-  
ted, also ne-  
cessary.



manded us; for we have all sinned, and come short of the glory, or Approbation of God, Rom. 3. 23. And therefore, as there is *One Mediatour between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. So we are strictly commanded Col. 3. 17. that *whatsoever we do in word or in deed, we should do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus*. And particularly as to that so considerable part of Religion, *Prayer*, it is ordain'd, we are told Joh. 15. 16. *That whatsoever we shall ask of the Father in his Name he will give it us*: And also as to that other great Duty of Christian Worship, *Thanksgiving*, we are solemnly enjoin'd Eph. 5. 17. 20. *As we will shew our selves not to be unwise, but understanding what the Will of the Lord is, to give thanks always for all things unto God the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: And *In him we have boldness and access with confidence by the Faith of him* Eph. 3. 12. The Meaning of which, and innumerable other places, that might be produc'd to this purpose, is this, That considering our own Vileness and Unworthiness, by reason of our Sins, we should ground all our Hopes and Expectations of Favour and Acceptance, and Reward, solely upon Christ: That we should offer all our Deeds to God, as Sacrifices and Services unworthy of Acceptance in themselves, and as proceeding from us, but pleasing and acceptable to God, only for his sake.

Such Dependence the Distinguishing Character of a true Christian.

And now this I take to be the grand distinguishing Character of Christianity, which ought therefore never to be omitted, when we pretend to give a full Account thereof. As to a good Moral Life, some Pagans did arrive to great degrees in Virtue (such as I wish may not rise in Judgment against us Christians now a-days :) And as for their Acting this upon good Principles, I can hardly imagine, that those who had such noble and worthy Thoughts of God, and of their own Souls, and who plac'd their Happiness in Purity and Uprightness, were so much wanting in that Ingredient also of Virtue, *viz.* The Acting it upon good Principles, as some do think. They seem to me only to have wanted the Knowledge and Belief of some more and better Principles which we do enjoy, to render their Virtue compleat in that respect also. But that the best of our Performances are so imperfect, that it was thought requisite in the Divine Wisdom, that the Son of God should become a Sacrifice to expiate their Guilt, and a Mediatour with his Father to obtain their Acceptance, is what the proud Hearts of natural Men never thought of, and no Religion but the Christian ever taught: But on the contrary, when they had done well, they did proudly over-value it, and did arrogantly challenge the Reward, not as of Grace, but of Debt.

Dependence upon Christ necessary to take down an Arrogant Conceit of our own Righteousness, a Temper of Mind most displeasing to God.

And therefore to take down this proud and arrogant Presumption in us, so natural to Man, and so dishonourable to God, together with his Design of making us Holy, it was withal God's Intent by such a Dispensation of his Mercies, as is given us in the Gospel, to create in us such a Reliance and Dependence upon Christ for Salvation, as to expect it, not on the account of our own holy Performance, but in the Vertue of his Mediation with the Father for us; for so it is written 1 Cor. 1. 29, 30, 31. *That to the end that no flesh may glory in God's presence, Jesus Christ is by him made to us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, that so he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord*. And indeed it does exceedingly tend to the praise and glory of his Grace, that he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, as it is said in Eph.

## Lect. I. *The Nature of a Catechism.*

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*Eph. 1. 6.* This does eminently set forth the exceeding Lustre of his Mercy towards us in the Gospel, that our Imperfect, if sincere Obedience, shall be accepted through the Mediation of Christ. It does utterly exclude Boasting, and all occasions of proud Reflections on our Parts, as if so mean an Obedience as ours, could deserve such infinite Rewards, as are made over to us in the Gospel; a Temper of Mind, which as it is very apt to get Entertainment in our Souls, so ought of all things to be suppressed within us. And thus I have given you a larger account of the Nature of the Christian Religion, than otherwise I should have done, that I might clear the way towards coming to the Knowledge of those *Fundamental Principles* thereof; which I told you are the proper Matter of a Christian Catechism.

And now answerably hereunto, the fundamental Principles of our Religion must be such Doctrines, as being well understood, and thoroughly believ'd, do most powerfully and forcibly persuade and move Men to be thus Religious; as to tend to destroy the Power of Sin, to mortify our Lusts, and all wicked Inclinations within us, to render us pious and devout towards God, just and charitable and peaceable Neighbours, and sober, chaste and orderly Livers in this World: And which shall withal create in us such an humble Opinion of our own Unworthiness, that when we have done all that we can, to deny our selves, and have proceeded never so far in our Zeal to good Works, we shall nevertheless, confessing that we are but unprofitable Servants, depend wholly on Christ's Merits and Mediation, and in the Virtue of his Satisfaction and Intercession alone, expect Salvation.

*The Nature of Fundamental Principles.*

And now such is the Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, particularly that part of it, the Vow in Baptism, wherein all do solemnly promise and vow Repentance, Faith and Obedience; engaging to renounce the World, the Flesh and the Devil. Whosoever considers this, sees what Obligations ly upon him to deny himself the sinful Pleasures of the World, and to govern his whole Life and Conversation according to God's Commandments. And whoever again understands the Constitution of this Covenant, knows that it was obtain'd for him by the Mediation of Christ, who is therefore Stiled, *The Mediatour of the New Covenant*, Heb. 12. 24. and therefore that on his Mediation he must depend for the having those infinite Blessings made good to him, which are promised therein to his Obedience.

*An Enumeration of Fundamental Principles.*

I.

*The general Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace.*

And such fundamental Principles also in a prime Sense are the Belief of all the Articles of our Christian Faith, as the Belief of God, and of his Providence, that he is our Creatour, Governour, and will Reward every Man according to his Works. The Belief that Jesus Christ came into the World, Died and Suffered to Atone for its Sins, and Preach'd the Gospel to Reform it. The Belief that he gives his Spirit to sanctify us, and that he will hereafter come in Person to Judge us. In a word, The Belief of all the Articles of our Christian Faith. These are indeed the true Principles of our Religion, for these are all of them (as I shall hereafter shew) so many very powerful Motives to reform our Lives, to forsake our Sins, and to follow Holiness, as that without which we shall never see God. And these do most of them, influence us, as to a good Life, so, humbly to rely upon God's Mercies through Christ for the acceptance of it.

II.

*The Articles of our Christian Faith.*

B

And



III. And such also are the Laws of the Ten Commandments, which contain the great Instances of our Duty to God, our Neighbour, and our Selves; and to which all others may probably be reduced. These Ten Commandments may properly enough be styled the *Principles of Religion*; for as the Root is the Principle, as it were, out of which all the Branches Stem forth, so out of these Commandments do all the Duties of a Christian grow forth, like so many Branches; so that whosoever shall well study and digest these Ten Summary Commands, shall scarcely fail of growing up to be a Good Christian.

IV. And if to these we add the Doctrine of Prayer, and of the Sacraments, which are the necessary Means, and appointed us by God, of our procuring and conveying unto us his Assistance, to enable us to mortify and forsake our Sins, and to become Holy: I do not know any other Principles that are Fundamentally necessary, either to the promoting of a Good Life here, or an Happy One hereafter; at leastwise so far, as to be the Matter of Catechetical Instruction, and the Business of a Catechist to inform you of them.

And indeed as these Doctrines are every One of them necessary to be Known, Believ'd, and Practic'd by every Christian, that may have the Means of Knowing them, and may be taught them, being no other than the Covenant of Grace it self, or those particular Articles contained in it, and which are expressly Enjoined upon us by the Word of God to be Believ'd and Practic'd by us; so our Church does account them the only Fundamental and Necessary Principles that are to be the Matter of a Christian Catechism. There are, it must be confest, many other useful Truths contain'd in the Scriptures; and those, who having first laid the Foundation in these already mention'd, would go on to Perfection, should endeavour, by Reading the Bible and other good Books, and by Attending to the Preaching of the Word, to gain the Knowledge of them: But a Catechism ought not to be crowded with any thing more than what is purely Fundamental to a Good Life here, and Happiness hereafter. And if other Churches have fill'd their Catechisms, either with many Unscriptural Tenets, as the Church of Rome has hers, or with any doubtful and nice Doctrines concerning God's Election and Reprobation, as many Others have done theirs, they have no reason to brag of their Abundance. It is the Glory of our Church that she Imposes no other Doctrines, as necessary to be Learnt by her Children, than those already mention'd, which are plainly declared in Scripture to be Fundamental and Necessary Principles, whereon we may securely build a Good Life, and the certain Hopes of Eternal Happiness; and which are so firm a Rock, that the Religion and Hopes of Happiness founded upon it, will not easily be destroy'd by the most violent and boisterous Temptations that the World, the Flesh and the Devil, shall Assault it withal, thereby to Ruine it.

Thus have I Adventured in as few Words, as the Difficulty of the Argument would give me leave, to shew you the Nature of *Fundamental Principles*, and to declare to you what Doctrines are to be accounted such, so far at least, as they are the Matter of Catechetical Instruction, and the Business of a Catechist to inform you of them.

I have

*A Catechism ought not to be crowded with any thing more, than what is purely Fundamental to a Good life here, and Happiness hereafter.*

Lect. I. *Who are to be Catechized.*

7

I have done this Point when I have told you, That a Catechism is *A General Instruction only, in the Fundamental Principles of Christianity.* *A Catechism is a General Instruction in the Fundamental Principles of Christianity.*  
 As a Catechism ought not to be crouded with any thing more than what is purely Fundamental to a Good Life here, and Happiness hereafter; so even those Fundamental Truths it ought to deliver in as short and comprehensive a manner, as possible; for a Catechism is an Instruction that must be fitted to all, even the weakest Capacities, and therefore it ought to be such a Form of sound Words, as all can retain: And the more explicate and enlarged Knowledge of these things is to be sought for in the Expositions and Comments that are given of them in Catechetical Discourses, of which Nature I design, by God's Grace, to Present you with some, until I have gone through your Catechism.

In a word, and to conclude this First Point: Such a General Instruction in the Fundamental and most Necessary Points of Religion, *Such were the Ancient, and Apostolical Catechisms.*  
 as we have given you an account of, was the Matter of which the Ancient Catechisms did mostly consist, even in the time of the Apostles, and such is the Catechism you are now Learning.

As to the ancient Catechizing in the Apostles times, as it is plain from the Example of *Theophilus, Luk. 1. 4.* that the New Converts received their first Notions of Religion by Catechizing, as was before observ'd: So *Rom. 6. 17.* we read of a *Form of Doctrine that was delivered to them*, which the best Interpreters suppose to have been a Summary of Christian Doctrine, or Body of Catechetical Points: And what those Points were, which they first taught them, we have expressly laid down *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* from whence it appears, that those *First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* were, for the most part, the very same I have now mentioned, *viz.* The Doctrines of Repentance, Faith, and of the Sacraments: They are also called there the *Foundation*, which being laid, the Apostle tells them, he will go on to perfect them by other Teaching.

And such a general Instruction also is the Catechism you are now *And such is our Church Catechism.*  
 Learning, and which I am at present about to Expound to you. You have therein indeed given you a Summary Doctrine of all the Fundamental and Necessary Articles of Christianity. And the Seed of these Catechetical Points, if they be but receiv'd into well-dispos'd Hearts, will in time, by God's Grace, produce a plentiful Crop of saving Knowledge: So that I may very safely Affirm it, That whosoever of you shall learn to understand thoroughly his Church Catechism, shall be sufficiently instructed to Salvation; and whosoever shall live according to those Principles therein taught, need no more to render him a good Christian in this World, and an happy Saint in the World to come.

And so much for the First Point in my Description of a Catechism, *viz.* The Matter of which a Catechism is to consist; that it is a General Instruction in the Fundamental and Necessary Principles of the Christian Religion.

Secondly, The next, are the Persons that are to be Catechized, and *The Persons that are to be Catechized, are every Person.*  
 in the Definition I have given of a Catechism, it is said to be *An Instruction necessary to be Learnt of every Person.* It is very certain that whoever would be skilful in any Art or Science whatsoever, he must



endeavour first to understand the Principles of it. This is every Day's Experience: He that would be a good Grammarian, or Latin Scholar, must first learn to understand his Grammar Rules; you know it is impossible to read at all before you know your Letters, or to read well till you can spell or distinguish between the Syllables. In like manner, He that would be a knowing, and withal a stable Christian (as it is every Body's infinite Concern to be both) he must make it his Care and Business to become well instructed in the Principles (those which we call the fundamental Points) of the Christian Doctrine: That the way to Perfection in the Christian, as well as other Doctrines, is to begin with the Principles of it, appears from that of the Apostle, *Heb. 6. 1. Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection.* Hereby you see, that his Method in Teaching, was first to begin with grounding in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and then to proceed to higher things; and the same Method the Apostle took in teaching of Religion, the same must the Disciples be supposed to do in learning of it. If the Apostle began with teaching of Principles, the Disciples must begin with the learning of them. And the Wisdom of laying first a Foundation of good Principles, and building our Religion upon them, and the Folly on the other side of not laying a good Foundation of such, is sufficiently represented in that Parable of our Saviour, *Mat. 7. 24.* The wise Man, he there tells us, *Built his house upon a Rock, or a Foundation of good Principles, and when the rain descended, and floods came, and winds blew and beat upon that house, it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock. But the foolish man he built his house upon the Sand, upon none at all, or a very sorry Foundation; and mark the Fate of that Man's Religion, when the Floods came, and the Winds blew and beat upon that House, it fell, and great was the fall of it.* A Person well grounded in the Principles of Religion shall be able to bear the Shock of the fiercest Temptations, But a

*The necessity of every Person's being well grounded in Religious Principles by Catechetical Instruction.*

Person of no Principles shall not be able to withstand the least. This Parable does excellently well set forth the Necessity of being well grounded in Religious Principles, which can only be done, I have shewed you, by learning of the Catechism.

*The Contempt hereof is the effect of Pride and the cause of Ignorance.*

I do not say that Persons should be always in their Catechism; but when they have laid the Foundation there, so that they cannot only say, but understand it, by having had it explain'd to them; my advice then with the Apostle to the *Heb. 6. 1.* is, That *leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, they proceed to perfection*, and farther to improve their Knowledge in Divine Things: But this I say, that every Christian must lay the Foundation of his Religion there; and if this has not been yet done, it is better late than never.

*The Contempt hereof is the effect of Pride and the cause of Ignorance.*

Those who think themselves too Wise already, or too Good to submit themselves to so mean an Instruction, as they ignorantly esteem Catechising to be, I can never promise my self much Good from them. Such indeed are generally Self-conceited enough of their own Skill and Knowledge; but it is scarcely to be imagin'd that they should not remain very ignorant in all sober and substantial Truth; nor can they but be subject to fall into the grossest Heresies and Errors, being untaught in those Principles, which are the only Foundations of all saving Knowledge and true Religion, and the Touchstone to try false Opinions by.

True



True it is; Children are the Persons that we do now commonly instruct this way, and it is requisite that even Children should be so instructed; for the Seeds of Virtue, and Principles of Religion, can never be too soon sown in their Hearts, that, if possible, Religion may have the first Possession of their Souls, which is a great Advantage, before that evil Examples, and bad Customs have corrupted them: *Children's Hearts.* But in regard, Children, tho' they learn the Words, can understand but little of the Meaning; and the Principles of our Religion being, for the most part, *deep Mysteries*, hard to be understood; the fittest Persons to receive an Exposition of these Things, must be Youth grown up to some Years of Discretion; for even these first Principles, if we regard the more clear, distinct, and satisfying Knowledge of them, and the more orderly Knowledge of their Method and Dependence one upon another, and the Knowledge of their useful Consequences, are *strong meat, belonging to them who are of full Age, even those who, by reason of use, have their Senses exercised to discern between Good and Evil*, as the Apostle's Expression is, *Heb. 5. 14.*

The Matter without doubt of Catechetical Doctrines is fit to be apply'd to Persons of any Age, that are as yet but Beginners in the School of Christ: And therefore, as we find in Church History, not only the most Learned of the Primitive Fathers, as *Pantenus, Clements, Origen*, did open Schools of Catechizing, by which means several Countries within few Years receiv'd the Gospel: So we also find from the same Histories, that Persons of all Ages, and of all Qualities, did submit themselves to be Instructed this way, till such time as they were perfected in the Mysteries of Religion. We read of Emperors, that have stood amongst the Catechumens, or Persons Catechized, and of some who have been Advanc'd from being Catechumens to be Bishops, the Highest Degree in the Church, as the other in the State. Nor is it design'd by our Church for the Instruction of Children only: But a *Catechism is an Instruction necessary to be learnt of every Person*, indifferently, before he be brought to be Confirmed by the Bishop, as appears by the Title and Description of your Catechism, on which Words I am now discoursing, which brings me to speak to what End Catechizing is design'd.

Thirdly, *And it is design'd to prepare you to be Confirm'd by the Bishop.* Confirmation is an open Profession from the Mouth of One formerly Baptized, and now come to Years of Discretion, made before the Bishop and the Congregation of Christ's Church, of Consenting to, and Ratifying that Vow made in Baptism by his Godfathers and Godmothers in his behalf, with a solemn Promise, that he will Endeavour in his own Person, according as was Engag'd for him, to Renounce the World, the Flesh and the Devil, to Believe in God, and to Obey him. This on the part of the Person Confirm'd: And then on the Bishop's part, It consists in his solemn Prayers to God, to enable the Party, by the Grace of his Holy Spirit, to do the same; and in his Episcopal and Fatherly Benediction, or Blessing of him, together with his Laying on of Hands, after the Example of the Holy Apostles, to certify him of God's Favour and gracious Goodness towards him. This is the Doctrine of Laying on of Hands, or Confirmation, entire and unmain'd in either of its essential Parts,

C

accord-

*The Seeds of Virtue and Principles of Religion can never be too soon sown in Children's Hearts.*

*However a clear Understanding of Catechetical Doctrines is attainable only by Persons grown up to some Years of Discretion.*

*It is not below Persons of any Age or Quality to lay the Foundation of their Knowledge in Catechetical Instruction.*

*The End of Catechizing to prepare for Confirmation, What?*

according as it is deliver'd in our Church, and is order'd to be Perform'd, both by those who come to this Holy Institution, and by those who are Intrusted with the Administration of it: And a Rite it is both greatly Necessary, and of singular Benefit in the Church of Christ.

Confirmation  
necessary.

And First, It is greatly Necessary, if you consider it only, as that wherein you do solemnly Ratify and Confirm your Covenant with God; for if when you come to Years of Understanding, you refuse, or wilfully neglect to appear before the Chief Minister of Christ, the Bishop, there solemnly to declare and profess, That you will stand to that Covenant, your Sureties in your Infancy did make with God for you; you may be reasonably deem'd to have Renounc'd the Covenant of Grace, and to have Repented it was ever made in your behalf; to have Renounced that Blessed Covenant, I say, and all claim to the precious Promises and Privileges thereof, which puts you above the Condition of Infidels and Heathens, which are *without Christ, and strangers from the Covenants and Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*, which the Apostle mentions, as a most forlorn and desperate Condition, *Eph. 2. 12.* So that it is highly requisite therefore, as you will not throw your selves back into the sad and comfortless Rank and State of Infidels, that you should Ratify and Confirm your Covenant when you come to Age.

I.  
As a solemn  
Ratification  
of the Cove-  
nant with  
God.

II.  
As it consists  
in the Episco-  
pal Benedi-  
ction, and  
Laying on of  
Hands.

Nor is it less necessary with respect also to that other solemn Part of it, the Laying on of the Hands of the Bishop, together with his Prayers and Episcopal Blessing. The whole Ordinance passes in the Scripture under this Title of *Laying on of Hands*, that being so eminent a Part of it, and because of the many Benefits that do accompany that Apostolical Rite. And so highly necessary is the Laying on of Hands in Confirmation to be retain'd in the Church, that *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* it is reckon'd amongst the *First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, and together with Baptism, said to be One of the *Foundation Doctrines of Christianity*. True it is, Laying on of Hands was used on other solemn Occasions besides Confirmation, as particularly in the Ordination of Ministers, *1 Tim. 5. 22.* But however in this *Heb. 1, 2.* By *Laying on of Hands* can be meant no other than that used in Confirmation, it being mention'd immediately after Baptism, which Confirmation is to follow, and number'd amongst those first Doctrines of Christianity, which it belongs to all Christians indifferently to be instructed in, whereas no other but that Laying on of Hands, used in Confirmation, does Universally concern all sorts of People. So that Confirmation, it appears, consider'd in both its Parts, is necessary to be used in the Church of Christ.

Confirmation  
Beneficial.

Secondly, And as it is necessary, so it is an Ordinance of singular Benefit to Men's Souls, if consider'd in its full Meaning and Extent. For why?

I.  
As the solemn  
Profession  
therein made  
imprints seri-  
ous Thoughts  
and religious  
Resolutions.

First, As to that solemn Profession therein made, Can any thing imprint upon Men's Spirits serious Thoughts, and Religious Resolutions, if such a solemn Declaration, as this, will not? *I do here (does every Person that is duly Confirm'd say) in the presence of God and of this Congregation, Renew the solemn Promise and Vow that was made in my Name at my Baptism, Ratifying and Confirming it in my own Person, and acknowledging my self bound to Believe, and to do all those things, which*

Lect. I.      *The End of Catechizing.*

II

my Godfathers and Godmothers did then undertake for me. And no Man that considers any thing, after so serious an Undertaking upon himself, and in so Solemn a manner, can commit an ill Thing, but his Conscience will afterwards the more upbraid him for it, will rouse him up, and awaken him to Repentance. Besides the Weight there is in the Profession it self, the making it in so Solemn a manner, before so awful an Assembly, in the presence of God, and before the Bishop and the Church of Christ, must needs be a very singular Means to fix you in your Religious Purposes; for as long as we are Men, and carry about us outward Senses, the Solemnity, whereby Religious Actions are perform'd, will be found to add great Advantages to the well-doing of them.

Nor again is Confirmation an Ordinance less Beneficial, consider'd in its other part; in the Prayers, the Blessing, and in the Laying on of the Hands of the Bishop. The Person to be Confirm'd, having Renew'd that Solemn Promise and Vow that was made in his Name at his Baptism, Ratifying and Confirming the same in his own Person: The Bishop does then proceed to Beseech God to Strengthen him with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily to increase in him his manifold Gifts of Grace, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Ghostly Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and true Godliness, and to fill him with the Spirit of his Holy Fear: And does moreover add his own Fatherly Benediction in these Words, *Defend, O Lord, this thy Servant with thy Heavenly Grace, that he may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come to thine everlasting Kingdom.*

II.

*As the Episcopopale Benediction, Prayers, and Laying on of Hands have Spiritual Blessings attending them.*

And now if the Effectual fervent Prayer of any Righteous man avail much, Jam. 5. 16. how much more may be expected from the Intercessions of One, who has, not only on the account of his own Personal Righteousness, but by Virtue of his Office also, an Interest in God, and the Privilege of an easier Access, and of nearer Approaches to him in Divine Offices: And who is Commission'd to Pray to God in the behalf of others, and is Authoriz'd to Bless the People in his Name? Why this is the Power and Privilege that the Priesthood had given them under the Law and Gospel both: Under the Law, as you will see Numb. 6. 24. Joel 2. 17. and also under the more Spiritual Dispensation of the Gospel, as may be seen Jam. 5. 14. So that much Benefit may, without doubt, be expected from the Devout Prayers and Paternal Benediction, or Blessing of a Father of the Church, for God will ever have a particular Regard to his own Institutions, and will Bless those Means of conveying his Grace, which he himself has Appointed.

But then especially you may promise your selves a favourable Answer to the Bishop's Prayers and Fatherly Benediction, when it is also accompany'd with the Solemnity of Laying on of Hands. This has in all Dispensations, before the Law, under the Law, and under the Gospel, been Used both by Natural Parents, and by the Spiritual Fathers of the Church, as a Solemn way of their Blessing. Thus Jacob Blessed his Sons, Laying his Hands upon their Heads, Gen. 48. 17. So Aaron lifted up his Hands towards the People, and Blessed them, Lev. 9. 22. And our Saviour also, When the little Children were brought unto him, he put his Hands upon them and Blessed them, Mark 10.



16. No doubt those Great Persons did not Intend hereby a fruitless Ceremony, but they did Design their Laying on of Hands, together with their Blessing, should have a Spiritual Effect, or else such Persons would not have Used it. But to put us out of doubt concerning the Graces, that will Attend the Prayers and Benedictions, together with the Laying on of Hands of the Fathers of the Church, we have a plain Instance thereof in what Peter and John did, *Acts 8. 15, 17.* who when they came down to the lately Baptized Converts of Samaria, *They Pray'd for them, that they might Receive the Holy Ghost, and then Laid their Hands upon them, and they Receiv'd the Holy Ghost.* And tho' the Gifts that then follow'd the Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles, may be supposed to have been Extraordinary Gifts, because the Infant State of the Church did then require such to Raise and Support it; yet the same Laying on of Hands after the Example of the Holy Apostles, and that by their Successors in the Church of Christ, the Bishops, may be expected to have still such Graces accompanying it, as in this present State of the Church, will be needful for you, and that thereupon the *Fatherly Hand of God will ever be over you, that his Holy Spirit will ever be with you, and that he will so Lead you in the Knowledge and Obedience of his Word, that in the End you may attain everlasting Life, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* And thus I have at length shew'd you what it is to be Confirm'd by the Bishop, and withal how Necessary and Beneficial it is to the Souls of Men, to be so Confirm'd.

*Catechism  
Necessary.*

And now Catechizing, you are told in the Title and Description of that Catechism which you are Learning, is requisite in order to this your Confirmation.

*I.  
To the solemn  
Ratifying of  
our Covenant  
with God.*

And First in order to your solemn Renewing therein of the Covenant and Vow made with God in your Baptism, and that you may Ratify and Confirm the same in your own Person. For why? In your Confirmation you do Voluntarily and of Choice take upon you that Profession of Christianity, which before, in your Minority, was done by others in your behalf. And it is necessary before you take upon your selves so great and weighty a Business, as the Performance of the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, that you be first Instructed, so as to understand them well, both what those Conditions of Repentance, Faith and Obedience are; and what mighty Blessings God Vouchsafes to make over to you in the same Covenant, that should be an Encouragement, and reasonable Consideration to you, to undertake so great and weighty a Charge. Just as in the case of a Person under Age, who, by reason of his Minority, being incapable of himself to Enter into any Covenants, his Trustees may do it for him: But when he is come to Age, and must Seal to, and Confirm such Covenants himself, it is requisite he have them Read to him, and be made to Understand what Advantages accrue to him thereby, before he Confirm them in his own Person.

But why not this Instruction, rather before Baptism than Confirmation? It is in Baptism that we Enter into Covenant with God, and Catechetical Instruction should therefore properly go before that, you'll say.

And in the beginning of Christianity indeed, when the Parties Baptized were, for the most part, Persons grown up to Years of Under-

Lect. I. *The End of Catechizing.*

13

derstanding, who Abandoning their Heathenish, or Jewish Principles and Practices, gave themselves up to be Christ's Disciples, it was required that such, even before they were Baptized, should be first Catechized in the Principles of Christianity, and be made to understand the Conditions of that Covenant, which by their Baptism they were to Enter into with God. And so it is still requisite, that all New Converts from Paganism, or Judaism, or Mahometism, or any other contrary Religion, should be likewise first Instructed before they be Admitted to Baptism, because such being as well to Unlearn, as it were, their former false Religion, as to Learn the true Christian Profession; they ought therefore to Understand both, e're they can well Renounce that, or before they can Reasonably put on, or Embrace this. But as to you who are the Children of Christian Parents, your Case is quite different, for having no false Religion to Unlearn and Renounce, and having a kind of Right of Inheritance, by Virtue of your Christian Parentage, to be Baptiz'd, even in your Infancy, into the Profession of the True; It is therefore sufficient that you be Instructed, after your Baptism, in the Nature and Tenour of the Baptifimal Covenant, provided that when so Instructed, you afterwards appear Solemnly to Confirm it before Christ's Ambassadour, the Bishop.

But then it is highly necessary you should be so Catechized and Instructed before you Personally undertake a Matter of so great Importance, that so when you come to make a solemn and publick Profession of such an Undertaking, you may do it in a way and manner, that becomes reasonable and wise Persons to do so great a thing in, who always know and consider the Weight and Consequence of Matters of Moment, e're they will Solemnly make a Profession of them, or Undertake them. So necessary is Catechizing in order to the Renewing and Ratifying in Confirmation, that Covenant and Vow which was made in Baptism.

Nor Secondly, Is it less necessary to your receiving Benefit by the Prayers, the Blessing, and by the Laying on of Hands of the Bishop in Confirmation. As Beneficial as these really are to all those, who shall come duly Prepared, yet it is certain, that without some necessary Qualifications in such as come to be Confirm'd (amongst which, to understand the Nature, Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, and seriously to Intend to Perform the same, are the first and chief) none will be much the better for the Bishop's Prayers, Benediction, or Imposition of Hands. These may be a Means indeed of Obtaining the Graces of the Holy Spirit, to Enable those, that understand their Baptifimal Vows and Covenant with God, to perform such their Engagements, but they are utterly unlikely to have any Operation upon those, who understand not what a Covenant of Grace does mean. And therefore Catechizing, which is the only proper Means to give you such an Understanding, must needs be exceedingly necessary to your being Benefited also by what the Bishop shall perform in your Confirmation.

And so much for the Nature, Necessity and End of Catechizing, so far as the Title of your Catechism does give us occasion to discourse of it. And if we consider it so far only, you have a great deal of reason to value Catechizing as a most necessary and useful

II.  
*To the Re-  
ceiving Be-  
nefit by the  
Episcopal  
Benediction,  
Prayers, and  
Laying on of  
Hands.*

D

Kind

Kind of Instruction, so as to need no great Invitation to it. The Points you see therein taught, are the most substantial and weighty Truths of Religion. The Persons to be so Instructed, are indifferently any Persons of whatever Age, Sex, or Quality, till they come to a competent Understanding of those most necessary Points, as has been Practiced in the Apostle's Times, and the Primitive Church. And the End thereof you see, is no less than to render you capable to Confirm that Covenant with God, wherein are contain'd the Highest and most Valuable Priviledges in the World, and which cost the most inestimable Price to purchase them for us, even the Blood of Christ, and which except you shall secure your selves an Interest in, you are desperate and undone Persons.

And now each of these Considerations are Reasons sufficient to bring you to be Catechized, and to make you value it, as a great Happiness you may be so Instructed to your Soul's health. But that nothing may be left unsaid, to raise in your Minds a due Esteem of Catechizing, and to perswade you to Attend it; I shall over and above what the Title of your Catechizing directly leads me to say concerning it, give you to understand several other good Uses to which Catechizing serves, as so many Arguments to Invite you to it.

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T H E

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## THE Second Lecture.

**A Catechism, that is to say, an Instruction to be Learned of every Person, before he be brought to be Confirmed by the Bishop.**

**L**AST Lord's Day taking these Words, which are the Title of your Catechism for my Text (as I shall do the several Parts of the Catechism it self, till I have gone through with it) and by Commenting upon them, I have given you an account of the Nature, and End of Catechizing, and the Persons to be Catechized.

First, As to the Nature of a Catechism, It is a general Instruction I have told you, in the Fundamental Principles of the Christian Religion. Secondly, As to the proper Persons to be Catechized, I have shewed you, that it belongs to all New Beginners in the School of Christ to be so Instructed; and indeed that every individual Person, of what Age, or Quality soever, ought to lay the Foundation of his Christian Knowledge in Catechetical Instruction. And Lastly, The End thereof, I have shew'd you, is this, That you may be duly fitted and prepared for Confirmation, both to Renew your Baptismal Vow before the Bishop, and may be Qualify'd to receive Benefit by the Bishop's Prayers, Benediction, and by his Laying on of Hands upon you.

Well, but there are several other good Ends and Purposes to which Catechizing serves, and because the Knowing of them may increase your Esteem thereof, and cause you the better to attend it, I will bestow One other Discourse in shewing you what they are, before I proceed to Expound the Catechism it self. And

Secondly, As for Confirmation, so it is also requisite to fit and prepare you that you may be *Worthy Communicants in the Lord's Supper.* <sup>Catechizing requisite to</sup> Just as in Confirmation, so in the Lord's Supper, we do solemnly, <sup>prepare Persons to be</sup> tho' not so publicly Ratify and Renew our Covenant with God; <sup>worthy Communicants.</sup> and for the same reason therefore, that Catechizing is requisite to prepare you for Confirmation, it must be also necessary to fit you for worthy Communicants, that you may Communicate with Knowledge, and as Persons that understand what they do. And alas! To what is it but to their having been never Instructed in their Covenant by Catechizing, that so many come so Ignorantly, or else not at all to the Lord's Supper. I say so Ignorantly, for as too many of

*The want thereof the Occasion of People's Ignorance concerning the Sacrament, and consequently* those, that do now and then Communicate, have but a slender Knowledge in the Nature and Conditions of their Covenant; so too few do understand the Importance of the Blessed Sacrament, that *It is the New Covenant in Christ's Blood,* 1 Cor. 11. 25. that is, That it is the Seal of that Covenant, which was Purchas'd by, and Ratify'd in his Blood: But such as have been thoroughly Catechized, as they have been made to Understand the Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, both the inestimable Privileges made over to them on God's part, and those very reasonable Conditions to be perform'd on their own; so they have been also taught, that One main End of Communicating in the Lord's Supper, is to Ratify, and Confirm, and Seal this Covenant of Grace between God and Us. And then those, that have been taught this, cannot come Ignorantly to the Lord's Supper, nor consequently are in such danger of coming Unworthily, for Ignorance of the Nature and Consequence of that

I.  
*Of Receiving Unworthily.*

Blessed Ordinance, is generally as much the cause, as any thing, that any do approach Unworthily to it.

II.  
*Of not Receiving at all.*

Nor if the People of our Nation had been ever thoroughly Catechized, would so many Abstain, as commonly do, from ever coming at all; for if all Men were thoroughly instructed in the Nature, Terms and Conditions of their Covenant, which it is the Business of Catechizing to do; as they would then easily discern, that it is the highest and most inestimable Privilege in the World, to be took into such a Covenant of Grace, wherein they have God Almighty Engaging himself, and putting his Seal to it in the Sacrament, to make good to them the most inestimable Blessings, Pardon, and Happiness, on the most reasonable Conditions, Repentance, Faith, and Gospel Obedience: So, if they did rightly understand this, they would then account it, as it really is, the highest Privilege in the World, to be Confederates with God in so advantageous a Covenant, and would think they could never often enough Partake at the Lord's Table, whereby the oft'ner they come, they do more and more secure to themselves those inestimable Benefits, made over to us by the Covenant of Grace; and Engage, as themselves more closely to God, so God himself more inviolably (as it were) to make good those Blessings to them. No surely, if all Christians had been but Catechized in those Points, both what a mighty Privilege it is to be in Covenant with God, and that Receiving of the Sacrament is the Rite of God's own Appointment, of Confirming to our selves all the Benefits of this Covenant, we should then have our People Daily crouding to the Lord's Table, which they do now so profanely turn their Backs upon; we should not then need so much to invite and entreat Persons to come, but they would of their own accord Embrace all Opportunities of more and more Ensuring to themselves these most invaluable Benefits, by often Coming.

In a word, A Man is no more fit to partake of the Lord's Supper, that does not well understand the Nature and Terms of that Covenant, which he does therein Ratify and Seal with God; than he is fit to Seal to Covenants and Leases, whose Conditions and Obligations he never had so much as Read over to him, nor does he know them. But Catechizing is the appointed and most proper Means of gaining a competent Measure of Understanding, in the Nature and

Terms

Lect. II. *It is requisite to Edification by Sermons.*

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Terms of the Covenant of Grace: Without having been Catechized therefore, a Man cannot be well expected to Partake worthily of the Lord's Supper.

And this is the Second Use to which Catechizing does therefore serve, to prepare you, that you may be fit and worthy Communicants at the Lord's Table.

Thirdly, Catechizing is very Useful to render you Capable to receive Edification by the Preaching of the Word, and to your Profiting by Sermons. That is certainly the true and only edifying Preaching, which does most plainly lay open before you, the Meaning, the Reasons, and the Importance of any Article of your Faith, whereby you may best Know God, and the Necessity of Serving him; and which does most clearly Explain to you the Nature and true Extent of your Christian Duties, whereby you may Know what it is you have to do, and may be freed from all causeless Doubts and Scruples about the way of your Happiness: And lastly, which does give you the most convincing Arguments and Reasons, to move and stir you up faithfully to Discharge your manifold Obligations to God, your Neighbour, and your Selves. Such as this is truly Edifying Preaching, because this will, if you do duly attend to it, build you up perfect Christians in the Knowledge and Practice of true Religion.

III.  
Catechizing  
is Requisite  
to Persons be-  
ing Edified  
by Preaching.

And now One that has been Catechized, so as to have a general Understanding in the Nature of his Covenant; when such an One hears a Sermon upon any particular Point of that Covenant, whereby he has more fully explain'd to him the Nature and Attributes of God, and his Saviour's Mediation, and of his own Duty, than formerly in Catechizing could be done; and when he hears any good Reasons and Motives given, whereby he should seriously apply himself to live so and so, as becomes the Servant of such a God, and such a Saviour, and One that professes to pay him such Obedience: When a Catechized, Understanding Person hears such Preaching as this, he finds his Understanding more enlightned with Heavenly Truths, and his Will and Affections more bent upon doing as he has been Instructed; and so (as in all reason he ought) he accounts such a Sermon truly Edifying, and himself Edify'd thereby.

But the Ignorant and Uncatechized part of the World, when they hear a Sermon (for want of Discretion to judge of its real Worth) such look only at some such trifling Consideration, as the Vehemence and Noise of the Speaker; and if there be but enough of that (as generally there is the greatest Shew, where there is the least of Substance) tho' they are made to know no more than they did before of the Importance of any Article of their Faith, or of the Nature and Extent of any Duty of Religion, they are however stunn'd into Admiration of they know not what, utterly dis-regarding the most Instructing and really Edifying Preaching, to the very great Prejudice of their Souls, and the utter hinderance of their Improvement by our Ministry, in all useful and substantial Knowledge.

Besides, it is a mighty Help to the gaining Understanding in any Science whatsoever, especially the Christian Religion, to have a general View given one of the whole (which it is the Business of Ca-

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techizing to do) and to see how one Point depends upon another, and do all sweetly agree together. For not to mention other Advantages, by this a Man shall be able to Judge the better of the Usefulness and Weight of any Sermon, or Religious Discourse on any particular Point, as whether it does thoroughly Explain it, or does not take in what does more properly belong to some other Matter. And by this a Man shall be able also to judge whether the Preacher *Builds upon the Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stone, or Wood, Hay and Stubble*; and shall be able to distinguish between, and separate the Refuse and Dross of a Sermon and Discourse from the weighty and substantial Parts of it. A Skill, which as it is of vast Consequence, so it is but little understood by the Generality of People, for want of having been well Catechized and Instructed in the Fundamentals of Christian Religion.

IV.  
Catechizing  
necessary to  
prevent being  
seduced into  
dangerous  
Errors.

Fourthly, Catechizing is also requisite to secure you from being at any time mislead into dangerous Heresies and Errors, by the Sermons and Discourses of Men, *Crafty to deceive*, to the infinite Peril of your immortal Souls. *There must be Heresies*, the Apostle tells us 1 Cor. 11. 19. *That they which are approved may be made manifest*. For God does permit them for our Tryal, whether we will stand stedfast to the Truth. And our Saviour bids us *Matth. 24. 45. Take heed that no man deceive us, for many shall come in my Name*, says he, that is, will pretend to be Ministers of Christ, *and shall deceive many. They will come with all deceivableness*, the Apostle tells us, 2 Thess. 2. 10. with so much Artifice and Cunning, that *if it were possible, they shall deceive the very Elect*, Mat. 24. 24. particularly of this sort are they, St. Paul warns us, 2 Tim. 3. 6. *Which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with Sins, led away with divers Lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth*. A Character, than which nothing can more exactly agree, to the Seducers of our Times, and the Persons, whom they do usually Practice upon to draw aside, which are for the most part Ignorant Women, and the Effect it has upon their Disciples and Followers, which is to make them great Talkers and Pretenders to extraordinary Knowledge, but in reality not one Jot wiser in the grand Points of the Christian Religion.

And now, if any of these cunning Deceivers should come to any of you, and endeavour to Pervert you, how is it possible you should escape their Wiles, except you shall be well Principled, so as thoroughly to understand the Foundation Articles of your Religion: But *Holding fast that form of sound words*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. Having well imbibed the Principles of Religion, which are taught in your Catechism; by these, as by a certain Touchstone, you will be able to discover, what are True, and what are Erroneous Doctrines. Those that agree with this Analogy of Faith, you may be certain are sound, what do contradict them, you may be sure are false Doctrines. "Catechizing is an excellent Means, says Mr. Gouge, to keep Persons from the Errors and the Heresies of the Times: For Persons well Catechized and Instructed in the Principles of Religion, are in a great measure Antidoted against the Poison of seducing Doctrines. And observe who are they, as he goes on, that are easiest seduced by false Teachers, who are they that have embrac'd their Erroneous

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Lect. II. *It prevents Youth from falling into &c.*

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"ous Tennets, and you shall find that they are such, who were never "well Catechized, nor grounded in the Principles of Religion. As therefore you would not be poisoned with the Erroneous Doctrines of false Teachers, take care to be well rooted and grounded by Catechizing in the Knowledge of the Truth.

Lastly, Catechizing is exceeding Useful to preserve Youth from falling into any gross and wasting Sin, and especially any Ungodly Course of Living; Or if he has been Seduc'd by evil Company, the having the Seed of good Principles sown in the Heart, by a timely Catechizing, will be the most likely Means to recover such a One out of the Snares of the Devil.

First, *It is exceeding Useful to preserve Youth from falling into any gross and wasting Sin, and especially any Ungodly Course of Living.* I. To preserve This was the Counsel of the Wisest of mere Men, of Solomon, 10 *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is Old he will not depart from it, Prov. 22. 6.* And that excellent Moralist, Plutarch, *into an Ungodly way of Living.* in his rare Tract of Breeding of Youth, speaks to the same purpose, that *As soft Wax is apt to take the Stamp of the Seal, so are the Minds of Children to receive in Instructions imprinted on them at that Age.* Let but your Youth be taught so much as they are capable to learn, concerning the Nature of God, how that he is wonderfully Good to those that Love and Fear him, and that he will be Terrible in Judgment towards those that Disobey him. Let them be instructed how wonderfully Kind the Son of God was to them, as to come down himself from Heaven to call them forth out of the wicked World (wholly given up to the Service of the Devil) to serve their God and Maker. Let them be taught betimes, as much as they are capable to understand of this, and of their Duty to God and Man, and what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession they have made in their Baptism, not willingly to offend so good and gracious a Saviour, but to serve and honour him for ever: Let but these Notions take the first Possession of your Minds, and it will be hardly possible for any Temptation to prevail over you, and to draw you into Sin; you will then Blush to hear the lewd and foolish Talk of the Godless Crew of hardened Sinners, you will then Tremble at their bold Oaths; and you will be out of Countenance to be so much as Seen in the Company of Drunkards. If they shall endeavour to persuade you to joyn with them in their lewd Courses, you will have That within you will quickly answer, I cannot, I dare not do so ill a Thing: I cannot be guilty of so great a Piece of Ingratitude, as to offend so good a God, and gracious a Saviour as mine: I dare not be guilty of so high an Injustice, as to violate my Covenant, Vow and Promise to him, for then he will eternally Punish me: *Away all ye workers of Iniquity, for I will keep the Commandments of my God.*

But Youth untaught and unnurtured, quickly fly out into all manner of Extravagances; for why? they know no better, they have received no good Principles that should controul them. Vanity, Youthful Lusts, and their wicked Companions hurry them into such bold Villanies, as make us admire the Patience of God, that forbears striking them quick into Hell, but on they go to provoke him to the utmost; and how should it be otherwise, since they have no Notion

of the difference between Good and Evil: Nor any Principle within them, that should in the least check them in the Pursuit of that which is Evil, and stir them up to that which is Good.

True it is, It may too often happen, that One that has laid up in store a good Foundation of Religious Principles, may be tempted, and much staggered in his Constancy, and perhaps be overtaken in a Fault, so as wilfully to do an ill Thing. But then observe the force of Religious Principles: Such a One will soon bethink himself what he has done, his Conscience will quickly smite him, and he will be immediately brought to Repentance (through the Power of good Principles) and his Fall will but make him more careful of his ways hereafter.

Nay, It may sometimes happen, that a very towardly Youth (notwithstanding all the care of his Parents and Christ's Ministers to bring him up in the *Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*) when got too soon from under the Eye of his Parents and wise Counsellors, and falling into lewd Company (with which this Age does too much abound) may at first be a little Laught out of Countenance by them, (as is their wont) for being too Precise, Reserv'd, and Melancholly; and after that be drawn by degrees into one Compliance after another with them in their Ungodly Revels: Nay, and at length be so drencht in Sin, as to deface the whole Image of God, that was wrought upon his Soul, so as to be even past all hopes of Recovery. This is very rare, but yet however too often, whenever it is:

II. But even in this case, Secondly, The Power of those good Principles that were early Sown, shall be wonderfully seen to the Glory of God, and the Praise of good Education. Let Diseases, Distresses, Poverty, or any sore Affliction befall a lewd and sorry Liver (as generally, sooner or later it does) either as the Fruit of their Sin, or as a Chastisement from God to reclaim them. If the Person afflicted has been One that was never Instructed in the Fear of God, he is never the better, nor shall you hear so much as a good Expression from him, nor any the least Signs of Amendment; for why? He Knows not what he is to do, nor where he is to begin, nor does he distinctly know any good Reason wherefore he ought to Amend; for Thanks to the Piety of his good Parents, he never had any Principles of Good instill'd into him; and therefore as all his Life time he Liv'd like an Atheist, so he now does Die like a Beast: He was ignorantly brought up, and he Dies ignorant and wicked both.

But if it shall happen, that One who had receiv'd the Seed of good Principles within him, be overtaken with some sore Affliction, and God be so gracious to him, as not to cut him off quickly in the midst of his Sins, but affords him a leisurely Chastisement; such a One shall begin to be serious and to bethink himself. He will recal to Mind what he once knew of God, and of his Duty to him. Those good Principles that have long lain Buried under a Load of Sin, will begin to stir within him. He will water them sufficiently with Tears of Repentance, and they will begin to work and revive within. And when he is once come to himself, so as to think seriously of Matters, with the Prodigal Son he will soon resolve to *Arise and go to his Father, and to say unto him, Father I have Sinn'd against Heaven,*  
and



*and before Thee ; and am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son, make me as One of thy hired Servants,* Luk. 15. 18, 19. The Seed of good and religious Principles sown in your Hearts by Catechetical Instruction, may well be compared to Seed, sown in the Ground by the Hand of the Husbandman. The Husbandman's Seed may lie Buried in the Earth under many Clods, so as to be in danger never to recover, but if the Rains shall descend from Heaven, so as to melt and dissolve that burden of Earth, with which the Seed was overlaid, it will then begin to work and revive, if it was good Seed, and may possibly bring forth a very fruitful Crop. So here, if you do but take care to have the Seed of good Principles sown in your Hearts, and should ye afterwards almost extinguish all good Motions within you, by laying on a continued Weight of Guilt and Sin ; and should God in Mercy hereafter, not pour down the Fury of his Wrath, so as immediately to Destroy you, but Rain down upon you the gentle Showers of Fatherly Chastisements, so as to melt you into Tears, and bring you into a considering Temper ; the good Principles that lay long Buried, may possibly begin to stir, and to work in you a Repentance fruitful in good Works.

Nay, Such is the Force of good Principles, that even a serious Sermon, or but the Discourse of a good Minister (especially of him, who first sowed them by his Instructions) shall stir them up, and put them a working, to the Conversion and Reformation of a Sinner.

In a word : Such is the Effect of good Principles, that by the Grace of God, they are the likeliest way to preserve you in Innocency, and to prevent your falling into any deadly Sin, and then you will be in a happy Condition ; you will then be of the Number of those happy Persons, of whom our Saviour speaks, that they *need no Repentance,* Luk. 15. 7. that is, such a severe, and sorrowful, and painful Repentance, as Backsliding Sinners, and all Men of loose and wicked Lives must go through, or be forced to Endure infinitely worse : Or if you shall unhappily fall into any grievous Sin, or a Course of Sin, such may be the Force of pious Education, or good Principles, as by God's good Grace and Providence, to recover you out of the Snares of the Devil. These good Principles taught you in your Catechism, may not perhaps at present be thoroughly understood by you, no more than Children do the use of Letters, nor School-boys the use of Grammar Rules, at first, but they will stick by you (as One said) and be remembered when you are more capable of Improving them, insomuch that it will be uneasy to you, if you take care to be well Principled in your Minority, to be Wicked and Profane hereafter ; or if you should prove so (which God forbid) there will yet be some hopes of Reclaiming you, because these things will some time or other revive and awaken your Consciences.

And this is the last of those good Uses and Ends, to which Catechism serves ; (*viz.*) to Instil into you such good Principles, as will either prevent your falling into Sin, (which is much the Happier for you) or at least recover you out of it by Repentance ; and which I have therefore insisted on, that I might perswade you to have a due Regard to so useful an Instruction, as Catechizing is, and to give a due Attendance to it.

And thus, as last Lord's Day I shewed you, that one good End to which Catechizing serves, is to prepare you for that necessary Work, your Confirmation, that you may Publickly, and with Understanding (as those that know what they do) profess before the Bishop, That you will be Faithful to your Baptismal Covenant : So Secondly, I have to Day shewed you, That it is for the same Reason requisite to prepare you for Receiving of the Blessed Sacrament, both by instructing you in the Covenant of Grace, which in the Sacrament we Seal, and in the Meaning of the Sacrament it self, that it is the Rite of Sealing it. Thirdly, I have now shewed you, that Catechizing is very Useful to render you understanding Hearers of the Word, when it is Preacht, so as you may receive Edification by it, and may be Profited by Sermons. Fourthly, That it is requisite to secure you from being at any time mis-led into dangerous Heresies and Errors, by the Sermons and Discourses of Men, crafty to Deceive, to the Peril of your immortal Souls. And Lastly, I have now largely shewed you, that it is exceeding Useful to preserve you from falling into any gross and wasting Sin, and especially any ungodly Course of Living ; or if any of you shall hereafter be Seduced (which God forbid) by evil Company, that the having the Seed of good Principles sown in the Heart by a timely Catechizing, will be the most likely Means to recover you out of the Snares of the Devil.

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T H E  
Third Lecture.

*What is your Name? And the Answer is made by the Christian Name.*

**I**N Two Discourses, on the Title of your Catechism, having given you to understand what a Catechism means, and shewed you also the Ends and Uses of Catechizing; I shall now proceed by God's Assistance to Explain the Catechism it self, and to give you the Meaning of its several Parts. And the first Thing that offers it self to our Consideration, is the first Question in your Catechism, (*viz.*) *What is your Name?* And the Answer you are taught to make to it, which is your *Christian Name*.

Now this Question is not so idle and insignificant, as some may imagine, but is ask'd upon very good Reasons; insomuch that I do think, they may give me a very fair Occasion, to discourse to you upon these Three Heads.

First, To shew you, that the Reason wherefore your Catechism begins with Asking you, What is your Christian Name? Is to put you in Mind of your Christian Profession, and of that strictness of Life, that is answerable thereunto.

Secondly, They do give me occasion to Re-mind you, that the bad Lives of such who bear the Name of Christians, do an infinite Prejudice and Dis-honour to Christianity.

And Thirdly, To exhort you therefore to stand upon the Dignity of your Christian Name and Profession, by living such good Lives, as may be an Honour, not a Disgrace unto it.

And these Three Heads of Discourse, as they do naturally arise from this Question and Answer about your Christian Name, so I know not any thing can be more properly and seasonably Discours'd upon in the Entrance upon your Catechism, as tending to warn you before-hand to Apply every thing you shall hereafter hear, either in the Catechism it self, or in the Explication thereof, to the Bettering of your Lives and Practices. To begin then,

First, I am to shew you, that the Reason wherefore your Catechism begins with Asking you, What is your Christian Name? Is to put you in Mind of your Christian Profession, and of that strictness of Life, that is Answerable thereunto.

It is thought sufficient to justify this Question and Answer about your Christian Name (tho' there were no great Matter imply'd in its meaning) that it is the Beginning of a Dialogue, it being the



usual manner of Dialogues, or mutual Discourses, managed between several Persons, (be the Subject of them never so grave and serious) not to fall immediately Point-blank upon the main Matter intended, but in such, they usually usher in the more material Points, by such familiar Questions as this.

But not to insist on this, and many other good Reasons, that might be given; tho' there be great Familiarity and Condescension in the Question, yet it is not without good Reason and Consideration, that in the Entrance of this Instruction in your Christian Religion,

*The reason wherefore the Catechism begins with Asking the Catechumen his Christian Name, is to put him in mind of his Christian Profession.* you should be first ask'd your Christian Name. And the great Reason is, That at the Mention thereof, you might be prompted to call to Mind what Religion and Profession you are of. You had your Christian Names given you, at the same time you took upon you the Christian Profession; you are therefore in the first Entrance of your Catechism (which is an Instruction of you in this your Christian Profession) Ask'd, What is your Christian Name? That you might call to Mind that most excellent Religion you received together with it, and under that Name solemnly Promised and Vowed, to maintain and cleave unto.

Your Sir-name you have derived down unto you from your Ancestors, and you receiv'd it from your Natural Parents: But your Christian Name you received immediately from the Mouths of your Spiritual Parents, your Minister, and your Godfathers, who as your Proxies, did at the same time, they gave you a Christian Name, undertake for you, that you should live a Christian Life, Holy and Unblamable, as becomes those, who bear so Glorious a Title. You must therefore consider what your Name is, and the Importance of it, that it is Christian, and you must take care, that you Live not so, as to bring a Scandal upon that Name, in any Sin and Wickedness; but so, as becomes those, who profess Christianity, and wear the Name of Christians, *In Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of your Lives.* And as he, who hath called you, is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation.

*The Force there is in a Christian name to make a Man lead a Christian life as under that Name having Lifted himself.* And there is indeed the greatest Force in our very Christian Names, to render us Conformable to the Christian Doctrine, and whereby we may be perswaded to live Christian-like, otherwise the Apostle would not have laid so much stress upon our very Name and Profession of Christians, as he does, to perswade us from that very Reason to live Holy and Christian Lives. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, or upon whom the Name of Christ is called, depart from Iniquity,* 2 Tim. 2. 19. For why? It is ever expected, that those, that profess to be guided by the perfectest Doctrines, should answerably live the most perfect Lives. The Heathens did therefore expect, that their Philosophers, who gave the highest

I. *A Disciple of a most Holy and excellent Religion.* Principles and Rules of Morality, should themselves exceed all others in a vertuous and orderly Course of Life; and when they found any of their Philosophers a Tripping, and living at the rate of other Men of looser Principles, how severely therefore would they Reflect upon them for it? Now we Christians profess our selves the Disciples of a *Philosophy*, that does infinitely exceed all others in the Powerfulness of its Principles and Doctrines, and in the Holiness and Strictness

# Lect. III. Of our Christian Profession.

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Strictness of its Commands. We have given up our Names, and Lifted our selves to be the Souldiers and Servants, not of a Lewd *Jupiter*, a Wanton *Venus*, a Fiery *Mars*, a Revengeful *Juno*, a Drunken *Bacchus*, and a Thievish *Mercury*: Such were the Heathen Gods, and no wonder then, that they who did Worship them, should also Imitate them. But we have given up our Names and Lifted our selves the Servants of *A God, that bath no pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall any Evil dwell with him; in whose sight the Foolish shall not stand, and who hateth all the workers of Iniquity; who will destroy all men that speak leasing* (that are crafty to Cheat and Deceive) and will *abhor the blood-thirsty and deceitful man*, P<sup>sa</sup>. 5. 4, 5, 6. Nay, *Who will rain upon the Wicked, Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and an horrible Tempest; this shall be the portion of their Cup, for the Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, his Countenance doth behold the Upright*, P<sup>sa</sup>. 11. 6, 7. Such is the God to whom we have given up our Names to serve: And we have Lifted our selves in our Baptism, under our several Christian Names, to fight under his Banner against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, so as not to be tempted or drawn off to commit any Injustice, or Unmercifulness, any Intemperance, or Filthiness, any Act of Ungodliness, or Profaneness: In a word, any Sin against him. We have Engaged our selves under our several Names in the strongest Covenants, in hopes of the most glorious Rewards, and out of fear of the forest Punishments, to be Faithful in our Obedience to him. We have openly Profest under our respective Christian Names, firmly to Believe such a Set of Articles (those of our Christian Faith) as are every one of them (as shall hereafter be made appear) the most powerful Motives in the World, to make us *Deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and Godly in this present evil World*. And under the same Christian Names we have all of us profest, To be Governed by such Laws and Commands of Vertue and Goodness, of Piety towards God, of Righteousness to our Neighbours, and which lay down such incomparable Rules concerning the Government of our selves, as the like are not to be found in any other *Philosophy*. And Lastly, We profess to have such Assistances derived to us from God, by Prayer and Sacraments (those Means of his own Appointment to convey down his Aid and Assistance to us, to Enable us to do these Things) as will make it not extreamly difficult to us, to live very excellent and good Lives.

II.  
As a Servant of  
a most Holy  
and Just God.

III.  
To fight a-  
gainst the  
World, the  
Flesh, and the  
Devil.

IV.  
As under that  
Name he  
professes to  
Believe such  
Articles as  
are the most  
powerful Mo-  
tives to deny  
all Ungodly-  
ness.

V.  
To Obey the  
most Righte-  
ous Laws.

Lastly, As  
having under  
that Name  
received Pro-  
mises of most  
powerful A-  
ssistances to do  
all this.

Thus have we Christians under our several Christian Names (as under Hand and Seal) profest our selves the Disciples of a Religion, that does infinitely exceed all others in the Powerfulness of its Principles and Doctrines, and the Holiness and Strictness of its Precepts and Rules: Of a Religion, that can work, if its Dictates be follow'd, the greatest Miracles in the changing Men's Natures and Tempers from worse to better; that can turn a ravenous *Wolf* into a harmless *Lamb*, a furious *Lion* into a tender *Kid*; that is, the most savage and violent Dispositions of Cruelty and Pride, into perfect Charity and Meekness. And now, if we Christians should be found as Debauch'd and Evil Livers, as Unconverted Heathens, as Lewd as Turks, as Gripping as Jews, as Impious and Profane as Atheists, how severely, and that deservedly, will the rest of the Infidel World

G

Upbraid



Upbraid us? What Dishonour shall we thereby do to the true God, and our most Holy Religion?

Which brings me to the Second Thing propos'd, which was to Remind you, that the Bad Lives of those, who bear the Name of Christians, do an infinite Prejudice and Dishonour to Christianity.

*The bad lives of Nominal Christians do an infinite Prejudice & Dishonour to Christianity.*

And alas! What bitter Reproaches have the Unchristian Lives of Christian Professors, put into the Mouths of our Enemies, making them to say, that if we Christians, did but Believe our selves, those Promises in Scripture, of such mighty Rewards to Holy, Honest and Good Living, we should sure our selves live better Lives: And when any of our Christians would perswade them to forsake their own Superstition and Idolatry, and to Embrace our most Holy Religion, our Unanswerable Lives have provok'd them to return smartly enough upon us, Would you have us to Believe the Truth of your Religion, which you do not seem to Believe your selves.

*It hinders the Conversion of Infidels.*

And alas! This is the main Thing, the very Unsuitable Lives of us Christians, that so Prejudices the Infidel Part of the World, Pagans, Turks, and Jews against our most Holy Religion, and hinders their Conversion. It is the Cruelty, and Covetousness of our Christian Merchants in the *Indies*, that makes the poor *Indians* even Abhor our Religion, and Scornfully to say, That Gold, not *Jehovah*, is our God. Thus *Is the Name of God Blasphemed amongst the Gentiles through us*, Rom. 2. 24. It is the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, which makes Turks and Jews (both of them mortal Haters of Idols) to loath and despise the Christian Worship.

*It puts bitter Reproaches in the Mouths of Atheists, especially when Wickedness is committed under the guise of Religion.*

But not to Travel so far, as the *Indies* or *Turkey*, to find out how much our Living so unbecoming our most Holy Profession, has scandaliz'd Persons, so as to Abhor it; Observe the Men of No Religion amongst our selves, our Atheists and Libertines, and what bitter Scoffs and Jeers may we daily hear them cast forth upon Religion it self, when they see some, that make great outward Professions there, guilty of so much Hypocrisy, Cheating, Cruelty, and Rebellion; making their very Religion, a Cloak for the carrying on the most wicked Things, as if the least Religious, the most honest Man. And now, if there were but the least spark of Love and Honour in our Hearts for God, and our most Holy Religion, this were enough to make us careful to lead innocent and inoffensive Lives, if it were only that we might not dishonour God and Religion thereby, and might not bring a Reproach upon our Christian Name. Every Man that desires the Honour and Reputation of his Calling and Profession, whatever it is, will live answerable to his Character, and not so, as to be a Scandal to his Place. And therefore, as we seldom see a Person of so ab-

*Few Men will endure their worldly Calling to be put at naught and Reproacht.*

ject and mean a Spirit, as to endure with Patience, whatever Art, or Profession he is of, to be set at naught and spoke against; so Men are generally, with respect to the Credit of their worldly Professions, careful to act with that Decency and Becomingness, as shall advance, the Reputation thereof. Hence the Lawyer, as he cannot ordinarily endure (except he be a profligate Person) his Profession of the Law, nor the Physician his, nor the Tradesman his, to be run down, Exposed and made Ridiculous; so each of these will be, as much as possible, for maintaining, in their several Dealings, a Reputation of Fairness and Honesty, as that alone which will raise and preserve



Lect. III. *For bad Lives do disgrace Christianity.*

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preserve an Esteem for them. And how then comes it about that a Christian can endure to hear his Christian Profession reproach'd and scorn'd by reason of his scandalous Living? Whence is it, but from the greater Zeal Men generally have for the Honour of their worldly Callings and Professions, than for the Honour of their Christian Religion, Profession and Calling?

And now therefore Thirdly, Let me Exhort you, to stand upon the Dignity of your Christian Name and Profession, by living such good Lives, as may be an Honour, not a Disgrace unto it: Let me therefore Admonish you from this very Name, wherewith you are Honoured, to render your selves wholly conformable to those Christian Principles and Doctrines to which you have given up your Names to be governed by, and which being taught you in your Catechism, I shall by God's leave, with all the Plainness, and in the most Useful manner I can, explain unto you.

*An Exhortation therefore to Christians to stand upon the Dignity of their Christian Name and Profession.*

And pray let me Entreat you my Dear Youth, seriously and diligently to hearken to me your Spiritual Father, that studies no less the Eternal Interest of your Souls, and to make you Heirs of Heaven, than your Natural Parents do your Temporal Interest to gather you Riches, and to leave you Estates in this World. You have been Ask'd, and you have Answer'd to your Christian Name; and you see with what Title you are dignify'd, (*viz.*) with the Name of Christians.

And first, Wonder not at what I say, those Titles of Honour, which we daily hear sounding in our Ears, and which are so much admired and doted upon; I mean the Titles of Emperours, Kings, Dukes, Earls, Lords, ought to be accounted as very inconsiderable in respect of our Christian Title. They are but Earthly Glories, and will soon decay and vanish away, but this is of a Divine Original, which will never fade, but will Ennoble you to all Eternity. I beseech you therefore seriously consider this, and let a due Honour and Regard to so worthy a Name, continually Admonish every one of you, that you never commit in your whole Lives, any thing that does unbecome it.

I. *As that which is more considerable than Titles of Honour.*

I do also, Secondly, Entreat every One of you to consider the near Alliance there is betwixt your Christian Names, and your Christian Profession, insomuch that they both began, and will both end together. In your Baptism you put on both your Name and your Profession of Christianity together, and if ever you should abjure your Religion (which God forbid) you must also therewith abjure your Christian Names, so near are they linkt one with another. And therefore let this ever admonish you to Adorn your selves with Christian Graces, Temperance, Chastity, Charity, Justice, Piety; and not to defile your selves with Heathenish, Brutish Vices, Drunkenness, Uncleannefs, Cruelty, Infidelity.

II. *Because of that near Alliance there is between the Christian Name, and Profession.*

Thirdly, And is it Examples of this good Use of your Christian Name, that you want? Why the Christians of Old took Courage from this very Name, whereby they overcame all their Enemies, both Bodily and Ghostly, the World, the Flesh and the Devil; and encourag'd themselves thereby to the Discharge of their Christian Duties. In the Vertue of this Name they extinguish't their Lusts, they overcame Tyrants, they put to flight the Devil. Their Persecutors with Fire and Fagot, and all manner of cruel Torments, would have forc'd them to Blaspheme Christ, to sacrifice and

III. *Because the Primitive Christians did in vertue of the Christian Name resist the fiercest Temptations.*

burn Incense to Devils, to worship Idols. But they in the midst of Flames and Torments would answer with Smiles on their Faces, We are Christians, we cannot do these Things. Forbear your Assemblies and Church-meetings, would the Heathen Persecutors say; We are Christians, and must not therefore *Forake the Assembling our selves together*, would they answer. Such great things did the Primitive Christians perform under the Power of the Christian Name. And let your very Christian Names likewise, my Christian Youth, encourage you to all manner of Vertuous and Religious Practices, in imitation of those Blessed Primitive Christians, and to the Examples of those, that shall come after you.

IV. Nay Fourthly, Look upon it ever as a most monstrous piece of *Because of the Indecency of Living unsuitable to the Christian Name and Profession.* Wickedness, for Christian Men, to live Antichristian Heathenish Lives, but on the contrary, ever look upon your selves, as you are Christians, bound even in Decency to *Abstain from all Appearances of Evil*, 1 Theff. 5. 22. What shall you, that have given up your Names to Christ, and are in Covenant with God, fight the Devil's Battels? *Know you not that your Bodies are the Members of Christ, and shall you take the Members of Christ, and make them the Members of an Harlot? God forbid*, 1 Cor. 6. 15. Shall you that are Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, walk in Darknes? Have you Renounced the Devil, the World and the Flesh, and you for all that yield your selves Slaves to the Devil, the World and the Flesh? You Believe the Gospel, and all the Articles of your Christian Faith, and shall any of you live as those, that neither know, nor fear God, nor dread the Devil? You have vowed Obedience to God, and shall you trample under Foot all Laws Divine and Humane? You have been dedicated to God, and have given up your Names to him in your Baptism, and shall you live, as if you had been Lifted in Satan's Service? Nothing so contrary, so contradictory as these things.

V. Alas! Consider, Fifthly, That you have given up your Names unto Christ for other Reasons, than that you should fight under the Devil's Banner, and do the Works of the Flesh; Namely, That you might ever live to the Honour of God. You have been call'd forth out of the World, not that you should add by your own, to the Iniquities of the Times, but to nobler Purposes; that you might re-establish the World now tottering, and ready to sink under the weight of Wickedness, that you might re-establish it, I say, by the Practice of all Christian Graces and Vertues. And for that Reason it is, you must consider, that you Christians are called the *Salt of the Earth*, Matth. 5. 13. the *Light of the World*, ver. 14. *A Candle put upon a Candlestick, that it might give Light to all that are in the House*, ver. 15. And therefore, *Let your Light so shine before Men, that others may see your good Works, and Glorify your Father which is in Heaven*, is the Inference, the Command of Christ, the great Captain of our Salvation, ver. 16.

VI. And moreover, Sixthly, Every Christian has commonly that in his particular Name, whereby he may be excited to some noble strain of Vertue. It seldom happens, that any one has a Name given him, of which there has not been some One before him, renown'd in History, either in the Scripture, or elsewhere, for some noble Exploit of Vertue, or other. And now, my young Disciple, search the Scripture, and other Histories, who, or what, He, or She was, and wherein

### LECT. III. Honour of their Holy Profession.

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wherein thy Name-sake did Excel in any Goodness; and propose such a One for thy particular Example, to whose Eminency in the like Vertue, do thou all thou canst to arrive. Do thou *John* bethink thy self often of that great Contempt of the World, that One of thy Name, (*viz.*) *John* the Baptist did shew, and of that burning Love to God and Men, which the other, (*viz.*) the Apostle of that Name did express, and let the One excite thee likewise to the like Contempt of the World, and the other to the like Love of God and Men. A *Peter* should do well to call to Mind the ready Confession of Christ, that the Apostle of that Name did make, and the speediness and sorrowfulness of his Repentance, after he had sinn'd, and let the Thoughts of him make thee ready to give Testimony to the Truth and Faith of Christ, and put thee upon a speedy Repentance, after every fall and backsliding into Sin.

*Christians to  
an Imitation  
of those who  
were Eminent  
under  
those Names.*

Let every *Anne* call to Mind that Widow of her Name, mentioned *Luk. 2. 37.* *Who though a Widow of fourscore Tears and four, departed not from the Temple, but served God with Fasting and Prayers, night and day.* And let the Example of this devout and happy Woman of thy Name, call thee *Anne* to the first beginning of Prayers, Sacraments, and Sermons. Let every *Mary* bethink her-self of those *Mary's* Famous in the Gospel, the One for her chaste Virginity, the Other for sitting so Attentive at *JESUS's* Feet, to whom the Lord gave this honourable Testimony, that she had *Chose the better part*, and prefer'd her before her Sister *Martha*, who disturb'd her-self too much with worldly Business, *Luk. 10. 40, 41.* and from her Example, learn not to entangle thy self too much with the Cares of this Life, but chiefly to take care of Heavenly things, and to apply thy self to Hearing and Devotion.

Lastly, Let me give it in Charge to you, that are Parents, not to give to your Children any other Names, but what are of Note for their eminent and good Examples, that they may have always before their Eyes whom they may Imitate in their Vertue. Give them such Names, as if not Signalized in Scripture, are at least in other Histories for some Good they have done: Or if you give them the Names of any of your Ancestors, let it be of those, whose Vertues have adorn'd, not whose Vices have disgrace'd the Age, they liv'd in: Or of such who have left behind them a good Name to be Imitated, nothing Ill to be Abominated by their Posterity, for those only are worthy to have their Memory continued in the Names of their Posterity, but these are fit to be Eternally forgot.

*And therefore Parents are Advis'd to choose for their Children, the Names of Persons Eminent for Vertue, not Infamous for Vice.*

And thus, my Christian Disciples, having shew'd you the great, the very great Obligation lying upon you, even from your Christian Names, to square your Lives according to the Christian Rules, those Rules, that you have taught you, and shall hereafter with God's Assistance, be explain'd to you in the Exposition, I shall give you of your Catechism: And from several Considerations having therefore urg'd you, to live with all the Care you can, according to that most holy Religion, to which in your Baptism you have given up your Names, and under your several Names have Listed your selves to maintain and cleave unto: What then remains, my Christian Disciples, but that you apply your selves with the greatest Diligence, in order to your living good Lives, to understand thoroughly that Re-

H

ligion



ligion to which you have given up your Names? There shall be nothing wanting, I do assure you, on my part, for I design, by God's assistance, to instruct you in all the *Articles of the Covenant of Grace*, and which are each of them contain'd in your Church Catechism. It lies on your parts to be teachable Disciples, constantly to repair here to be Catechized and Instructed by me, to have attentive Ears, open Hearts, and faithful Memories.

And Oh! That I might always find you such! What Satisfaction would then accrue to my self! What Profit to you! And how great and eternal Rewards to us both? And that it may thus succeed with all of us, Pray let it be our constant and fervent Desires to God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE

## THE Fourth Lecture.

*Quest.* Who gave you that Name?

*Ans.* My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism, wherein I was made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Quest.* What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?

*Ans.* They did promise and vow three things in my Name, first, That I should Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Soups and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh. Secondly, That I should Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And Thirdly, That I should keep God's holy will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my Life.

*Quest.* Wost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do, as they have promised for thee?

*Ans.* Yes verily, and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.

**A**S the Compilers of the Catechism did very wisely begin with a Question and Answer about your Christian Name, to the End, that at the mention thereof, you might take occasion to consider the great Obligation, which lies upon you to live according to that most Holy Religion, which under that Name you have received; so in Commenting upon that Question and Answer about your Christian Name, I have given you my self some preparatory Admonitions, accordingly to make that good Use of those Instructions, shall be given you from your Catechism, as to live suitably to them.

And being thus well prepar'd, I hope, to receive Benefit from what shall hereafter be deliver'd; what remains, but that I proceed to Instruct you in all the Material Parts of the Christian Religion, to the Belief and Practice of which you have given up your Names? This, by the Assistance of God, I shall endeavour to do, (and I beg your Prayers to obtain his Assistance) and in the same

*Our Catechism gives an entire Instruction in the Covenant of Grace, both generally and particularly.*

Method your Catechism teaches you; and I am sure I cannot choose a better to do it in; since whatsoever is necessary to be Believ'd and Practis'd in order to Salvation, you have therein taught you both generally, and particularly.

I.  
*Generally in the 3 First Questions and Answers.*

As to a more General Institution, you have the sum and substance of the Christian Religion, and whatsoever is necessary to Salvation taught you that way, in those Three Questions and Answers, which I have now read to you. The sum and substance of Christian Religion, and whatsoever is necessary to Salvation, is certainly contain'd within the Covenant of Grace; for undoubtedly there can be nothing more of absolute Necessity to Salvation, than what God himself has been pleas'd to Promise and Ensure unto us, and we our selves have Engag'd to perform. And now in these Three Questions and Answers now read to you,

First, You have whatsoever pertains to the Nature of the Covenant of Grace expressly deliver'd. I will instance to you the particulars, which pertain to the Nature of it, and will point to the Words wherein they are taught.

And in the first place you are Instructed, what are the Terms and Conditions whereof it consists, both on God's Part, and on Ours, in these Words, *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven*, which are the Mercies and Favours made over to us on God's Part of the Covenant; and in these, *First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Secondly, That I should Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And Thirdly, That I should keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my Life*, which are the Conditions to be perform'd on our Part of the Covenant.

Secondly, You have here taught you the Gracious Importance of this Covenant, we are put thereby into *A State of Salvation*.

Thirdly, You have an Account of the Original of it, and by whose Mediation, you obtain'd so Beneficial and Gracious a Covenant, taught you in these Words; *Through Jesus Christ our Saviour*. It was through the Mediation of Jesus Christ, that we obtain'd the Benefit of so Gracious a Covenant.

Fourthly, You are Instructed by whom, and how you have been call'd into this State of Salvation, by Means of the Covenant of Grace. It was your *Heavenly Father, who hath call'd you to this State of Salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour*.

And Lastly, You are Admonisht of the very great reason you have to thank God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, for so exceeding great a Mercy, as his Calling you into it. *And I thank God our Heavenly Father, that he hath call'd me to this State of Salvation, thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour*. Thus far you are Instructed concerning what pertains to the Nature of the Covenant.

II. You have also declar'd unto you, by what Sacrament, or Solemnity you first enter'd into it. It was in your *Baptism, wherein you was made a Member of Christ, &c.*

III. You have then those vast Obligations lying upon you, Faithfully and Conscientiously to discharge your part of the Covenant laid plainly



**Lect. IV. A Scheme of the Church-Catechism.**

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plainly before you. This you own in your Answer to this Question, *Dost thou not think, that thou art bound to Believe, and to Do as they have promis'd for thee?* To which you are taught to Answer, *Yes verily so I will.*

IV. You have farther yet, the Means whereby you shall be enabled to perform your Part of the Covenant. The First is the Grace, Help and Assistance of God. *And by God's Help so I will.* The Second Means, both to obtain the Divine Assistance, and to enable you thereby to discharge your Covenant, is Prayer unto God. *And I Pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.*

And Lastly, You have also Intimated herein, Two material Circumstances, relating to the making of this Covenant betwixt God and You, *viz.* 1. The time of Infancy, wherein you enter'd into it, imply'd in these Words, *Wherein I was made.* 2. The Persons by whom, as *Proxies*, you were Initiated therein. *My Godfathers and Godmothers did promise and vow three Things in my Name.*

I will endeavour to Explain all these Points unto you, in this First and General Part, according as they are here taught you in these Questions and Answers now read, as the Text, beginning

First, With what pertains to the Nature of the Covenant of Grace.

And in order to the Understanding hereof, it may not be amiss to premise something concerning the more general Notion of such Covenants, as are usually made betwixt Governours, and their Subjects. And such an One, if it be perfect in all its Parts, and fully exprest, may be defin'd to be

*An Agreement between the Two Parties, wherein there are Promises, The Notion Rewards, or profitable Considerations made over on one Part, and certain of a Covenant. Conditions to be perform'd on the other. And wherein also, there is an Obligation on the one side, of undergoing some certain Penalties, in case of not performing those Conditions consented unto by him, and impos'd on him by the other.*

A Covenant, I say, is a mutual Agreement between Two Parties; for if it be not mutual, and both Parties are not consenting to the Terms, the One to the making good the Promises, the Other to the performing the Conditions, the Agreement is none at all, or it is not Perfect-ed, nor is it Obliging on either side. There may be indeed a Law given by one that is Superior in Power and Authority, which the Inferior is bound to Obey, whether he consent, or no, because he is plac'd by the Divine Ordinance, under the Other's Command, and if he does refuse to Obey, he may be justly Punisht; but then such a Transaction is to be consider'd as the giving of a Law, not as the making of a Covenant. Nor is this a slight Difference; for where a Superior has given a Law, if the Inferior has also Covenanted, and consented upon good Considerations, and upon the Expectation of promis'd Rewards to obey that Law; such a Covenant does withal lay a farther Obligation on the Party, on whom the Conditions ly to be perform'd, by vertue of his own Consent, to do it; so that in the Violation of his Duty, in such a case, he shall be accounted, not barely Disobedient, but a *Covenant-breaker*, which is added as a more aggravated Sin, *Rom. 1. 31.* and therefore deserving a more severe Punishment.

*As there are Conditions on one Part, on certain Conditions to be perform'd on the other. And herein also, with respect to these Promises, there seems to be another main Difference betwixt the Imposing of the Law, and the Making of a Covenant. The Difference seems to be in this, That in the Imposing of a Law, the Law-giver does not necessarily oblige himself to confer any Benefits, more than natural Equity does oblige him to, and it is sufficient to the Validity of his Law to render it Obligatory, if there be a Threatning of Punishments, great enough to deter the Subject from the Violation of that Law. But a Covenant does imply something more comfortable in the Notion of it, and therein the Party covenanting, tho' it be God himself, does graciously Condescend to oblige and bind himself, by exprefs Promises, (and usually by some outward Solemnities, as visible Signs and Seals) to the performance of such Promises. And here also is another very considerable Difference betwixt the Obligations of a Law and a Covenant, that whereas on performance of Obedience to the Laws of a Superior, the Subject upon such his Obedience, can have only, by vertue of the Law, some general and faint Hopes of Benefit, so far as is Equitable, and as those who do well, may expect to receive well. But, by vertue of a Covenant, the Party promising has moreover given to the other, a full assurance of certain Benefits to be made good to him; insomuch that upon our Repentance and Confession of our Sins, God will reckon himself in Justice and Faithfulness bound (since the giving of the new Covenant) to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness, 1 Joh. 1. 9. So that in short, A Covenant lays a greater Obligation, than the meer imposing of a Law does, upon both the Parties joyn'd in Covenant; a greater Obligation, I say, upon the One, to perform the Conditions, upon the Other, to make good the Promises. And let this suffice to have remark'd upon the more general Notion and Nature of a Covenant.*

It was farther added in the Definition, That in a Covenant there are certain Promises, Rewards, and profitable Considerations made over on one Part, on certain Conditions to be perform'd on the other. And herein also, with respect to these Promises, there seems to be another main Difference betwixt the Imposing of the Law, and the Making of a Covenant. The Difference seems to be in this, That in the Imposing of a Law, the Law-giver does not necessarily oblige himself to confer any Benefits, more than natural Equity does oblige him to, and it is sufficient to the Validity of his Law to render it Obligatory, if there be a Threatning of Punishments, great enough to deter the Subject from the Violation of that Law. But a Covenant does imply something more comfortable in the Notion of it, and therein the Party covenanting, tho' it be God himself, does graciously Condescend to oblige and bind himself, by exprefs Promises, (and usually by some outward Solemnities, as visible Signs and Seals) to the performance of such Promises. And here also is another very considerable Difference betwixt the Obligations of a Law and a Covenant, that whereas on performance of Obedience to the Laws of a Superior, the Subject upon such his Obedience, can have only, by vertue of the Law, some general and faint Hopes of Benefit, so far as is Equitable, and as those who do well, may expect to receive well. But, by vertue of a Covenant, the Party promising has moreover given to the other, a full assurance of certain Benefits to be made good to him; insomuch that upon our Repentance and Confession of our Sins, God will reckon himself in Justice and Faithfulness bound (since the giving of the new Covenant) to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness, 1 Joh. 1. 9. So that in short, A Covenant lays a greater Obligation, than the meer imposing of a Law does, upon both the Parties joyn'd in Covenant; a greater Obligation, I say, upon the One, to perform the Conditions, upon the Other, to make good the Promises. And let this suffice to have remark'd upon the more general Notion and Nature of a Covenant.

*A View of the Covenant of Grace.*

But for our better understanding the distinct Nature and Notion of the Covenant of Grace in particular, we must take our Rise from the very Creation, and consider the several Dispensations of God, by way of Covenant with Mankind. And to begin with the Covenant made with Adam, and in him with all Mankind; the whole Proceeding stands thus: God having made Man upright, and given him a great measure of Light to direct him, and of Strength to enable him to do, as he should appoint; proceeded then to make this very reasonable Covenant and Agreement with him. He agreed to continue and increase that Light and Strength to him, and to reward his acting according to it with immortal Life and Happiness, provided he making use of his Understanding and Power, would persevere to obey his Maker's commands, which if he should not do, in every particular Instance of Duty, he threatned him with Death, and eternal Misery. But then leaving him to act according to that freedom of Will, wherewith as a reasonable Creature he had endow'd him, Man did by his own voluntary Disobedience, thro' the Cunning of Satan, tempting him thereto, transgress the Law given him

*God having made Man upright, and in a capacity never to have violated his Covenant, did Engage him to a perfect, exact, and unsinning Obedience.*

*Man did Violate it.*



him by his Maker, *Gen. 2. 17.* and did thereby cast himself into a State of Sin and Misery under the Bondage of Satan, without any power, or possibility to recover himself out of that wretched Condition. And thus he broke his Covenant with God, Sinn'd against his Creator, and so forfeited all the Happiness, convey'd to him therein, both for himself, and his Posterity:

And now was Man in a desperate and forlorn Condition: His own Sin had made him liable to the severest Strokes of God's displeasure; and the Divine Justice, and Wisdom, and Holiness would not permit the Almighty (however his Goodness inclin'd him to Pity) to let his Sin go unpunish'd, and to restore him to a capacity of Happiness, without a valuable *Satisfaction* made to infinite Justice, such as should shew the Divine hatred of, and severity against Sin, for the security of his Government in the World: And yet no Creature in the Heavens above, or in the Earth beneath, was sufficient for so great an Undertaking, as to satisfy for him, For *There is no Man can Redeem his Brother, or pay God a Ransom for him, for the Redemption of his Soul is precious, Psal. 49. 7.* And what now shall be done to rescue Mankind out of this miserable State? Why, when unhappy Man was in this desperate and forlorn Condition, past all hopes of Remedy, or Recovery, then did God's unspeakable Goodness choose to appear; for to the wonder of Men and Angels, he does himself find out this way, to raise us out of the Abyss of Misery, into a State of Happiness again, that he *Soloved the world, lasting Punishment that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life, Joh. 3. 16.*

*The Divine Justice, Wisdom, and Holiness requir'd Satisfaction.*

*Man being himself incapable to make it, by less than suffering an everlasting Punishment.*

So infinitely great, I say, were the Mercies of God to us, and so admirable was his Wisdom in the Expression of 'em, that he himself contriv'd (when no one else could) this Expedient for our Deliverance out of this desperate and forlorn State: *First*, Because his Justice must be satisfy'd for the Breach of his Covenant, and yet on the other side he would not have us Eternally punish'd, he therefore gave his own Son to Dye in our stead, and by the infinite Merit of his Sufferings, to make Satisfaction to infinite Justice, which we could not, *so 2 Cor. 5. 21. He made him to be Sin, or a Sin-offering for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* And then *Secondly*, Because it was impossible to be Sav'd by the First Covenant, which required Unsinning Obedience, which we in our fallen State could not perform; he gave him therefore to Cancel the *First Covenant*, and by his Blood-shedding to Purchase for us a *Second*, whose Terms and Conditions being more possible and easy, we might be capable of obtaining Salvation under it. Hence is he styl'd, *The Mediatour of a better Covenant*, Heb. 8. 6. And his Blood call'd, *The Blood of the New Covenant*, or the Blood, by which the New Covenant was purchas'd, and which was shed for many, for the Remission of Sins, Matth. 26. 28.

*The Son of God undertook.*

*I. To satisfy for the Breach of the First.*

*II. To Cancel it, and in its stead to make a Covenant of Grace consisting of conditions performable in our fallen State.*

And the Terms and Conditions of this Second Covenant, being no more a perfect, exact and unsinning Obedience; Repentance is henceforward to be admitted as a Means of Reconciliation, and a sincere Obedience, to the best of our Power, will be accepted; and Faith in God, and in Jesus Christ, accompany'd with Living like those, who Believe the Gospel, shall be henceforward imputed to

*Wherein Repentance, Faith, and a sincere Obedience is accepted, instead of a perfect; our exact, and*



unfinning  
bedience.

O. our Justification; so that we shall have our Sins pardon'd, and be receiv'd to Happiness: This in short was the Tenour both of the First Covenant, made with *Adam*, and the Second, procur'd for us by the Mediation of *Jesus Christ*. Not to speak here of the different Measures and Degrees of its Promulgation; nor of that Legal Covenant whereof *Moses* was the Mediatour, and was made only with the People of *Israel*, and was annex'd as an Appendix and Codicil to this Covenant of Grace, for Reasons too many, and too large now to be consider'd. For tho' to shew how, that the whole Promulgation of this gracious Covenant, was not made all at once, but that it seem'd good to the Divine Wisdom, that so stupendious and grand a Scene of Mercy, should not be open'd but by degrees; tho' to shew this, I say, and the several Reasons of adding this Legal Covenant to the Covenant of Grace, may be useful Points of Divinity to be explain'd in their due time, yet I look upon 'em, as none of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, but rather part of that Strong Meat, spoke of, *Heb. 5. 14. which belongeth to them who are of full Age*, and have been already competently well instructed, and and so to be no proper Matter of Catechetical Doctrine.

To proceed therefore, and in a word, we may consider the Second Covenant, not as such indeed, which is made betwixt a Master and his Servant, wherein the Master engages to allow Meat, Drink, and Wages, on Condition the Servant will perform unto him such and such Services, which are just and reasonable, and the Servant is capable to perform, which expresses more the Nature of the Covenant of Works, *Do this and Live*: But rather, (for this comes nearer to the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, between God and us, which is full of advantageous and profitable Considerations on our side) we may rather compare it, I say, to an Accord, made betwixt a Gracious Prince, and his Rebellious Subjects, as suppose some City, or State, wherein the Prince is graciously pleas'd, through the Intercession of some great Favourite, to grant unto those his Subjects, not only Pardon of their former Crimes; but moreover, certain great Priviledges and Freedoms, Protection, and several particular Favours, Lands and Possessions, and the like; on Condition they will thence-forward Renounce and Forsake all his Enemies, and place no farther Trust, nor Confidence in 'em; and will not Disobey him for the future in any of his just and reasonable Commands, but pay him a true and faithful Obedience to all his Laws.

It resembles  
Articles of  
Accommodati-  
on made thro'  
the Inter-  
cession of a  
Prince's El-  
dest Son, be-  
twixt him  
and his Re-  
bellious Sub-  
jects.

And much of the same Nature, I say, is the Covenant of Grace, made betwixt God and all Christians, thro' the Mediation of his only Son, only with this difference: That on God's part, the Benefits and Advantages are of most infinite Value, which are made over to us his Rebellious and Disobedient Subjects; and this upon the most reasonable, just, and easy Conditions, considering the Assistance he affords us, by the Vertue of the same Covenant, to perform 'em. For Almighty God, in the first place, vouchsafes us in this Covenant, to be made *Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*, which are Mercies and Priviledges of invaluable Benefit and Advantage to us: And we on the other side, Engage, and Promise, but to *Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts*

Lect. IV. *A general View of &c.*

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*Lasts of the Flesh ; to Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith ; to Obey God's holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our Life ;* which, I say, are most reasonable, just, and easy Conditions, considering the Assistance he will afford us, to enable us to perform 'em.

This will very clearly appear, by that time I have Explain'd to you, distinctly, and severally, the Terms and Articles of this Covenant ; both the Advantages made over to us on God's part, and the Conditions to be perform'd on ours, as they are taught you in the Words, now read to you.

And it is a Subject, indeed, that does extreamly concern you to be well Instructed in, and to be consider'd by you. None of you shall be able to perform a Bargain, except you know, what you have bargain'd and agreed to do. No One can discharge a Bond, except he knows distinctly what he is oblig'd to pay ; no more can any of you be able to perform the *Covenant of Grace*, except you do well understand the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of it.

And, indeed, there is perhaps but little necessary to be known in Religion, besides the Articles of this Covenant. We may without *Little more of universal Concernment to be known, but the Articles of this Covenant.* Prejudice to our Salvation, doubtless, be ignorant of many Points, that are Canvaſt with Heat enough, in the Controversies of Men of all Perswasions ; but to know what inestimable Blessings God has Promis'd and Ensur'd to us, and what we are to perform to make our selves *Inheritours* of those Blessings, is what every Body, who believes a future State, and the Immortality of his Soul, and that it is worth his while, to study the Salvation of his Soul, must think it necessary, except he can imagine it safe to take his Journey to Heaven blindfold, when he cannot think of getting, but to his short Home here on Earth, without his Eyes open.

A distinct and clear Understanding of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions, and of all that pertains to the Covenant of Grace, is, without doubt, of all things in the World, the most necessary. And there is no Method of Instruction, whereby it can be so distinctly and clearly known, as the Catechetical way : For not to say, that *The Catechetical Method most useful to that Purpose.* Preaching, now upon one Head, and immediately after upon another, without any dependance and coherence of the several parts of Christianity together, is not so likely to give Persons a clear understanding of the whole Nature and Design of Christianity, as may be requisite : The Catechetical way, by treating orderly on all the Parts of our most Holy Religion, and by giving thereby, a distinct View of their natural Connection with, and Dependance one upon another, has this Excellency in it, no doubt, that thereby Persons shall be better able to judge of the beautiful Contexture, and admirable Contrivance of the whole ; and shall easily discern what End it is, that Christianity aims at, and how admirably every Part of it, is fitted to carry on that great End.

It is, without all doubt, a most useful Method of Instruction, and it would soon appear to be so, in its happy Effects, would all Persons but lay aside their unhappy Prejudices against it, as if it were proper only for Children, to be Hearers thereof : Whereas, indeed, it is no ways unbecoming the Eldest, and most Knowing Persons, to hear the great and fundamental Doctrines of Religion, explain'd, and

handled distinctly and clearly, and separated from all unnecessary Mixtures.

But where all the Means and Methods of Instruction are little enough, to give Men a sufficient Understanding in all that is necessary to Salvation; instead of comparing 'em one with another, we had better to make use of all, and to Pray to God, to give a Blessing to all his Ordinances, that every one may be useful to the Edification, and Salvation of every Christian; which, that they may all prove, may God Almighty grant of his infinite Goodness, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. Amen.

And it is well Instructed in, and to be considered by you. None of you shall be able to perform a Task, except you know what you have bargain'd and agreed to do. No One can discharge a Bond, except he knows distinctly what he is oblig'd to pay; no more can any of you be able to perform the Covenant of Grace, except you do well understand the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of it.

And, indeed, there is perhaps but little necessary to be known in Religion, besides the Articles of this Covenant. We may without Prejudice to our Salvation, doubtless, be ignorant of many Points, that are Controversial with respect to the Controversies of Men of all Persuasions; but to know what is essential to Salvation, God has promis'd and oblig'd to us, and what we are to perform to make our selves Answerable to that Blessing, is what every Body, who be-  
~~lieves in the Covenant of Grace, and is desirous to be saved, should~~  
 worth his while, to study the Salvation of his Soul, most think it necessary, except he can imagine it safe to take his Journey to Heaven blindfold, when he cannot think of getting, but to his last Home have on Earth, without his Eyes open.

A distinct and clear Understanding of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions, and of all that pertains to the Covenant of Grace, is

without doubt, of all things in the World, the most necessary. And there is no Method of Instruction, whereby it can be so distinctly  
 THE  
 Teaching, now upon one Hand, and immediately after upon another, without any Discontinuity and Coherence of the several parts of Christ's Ministry, as the Evangelical way: For not to have that unity of the whole, and Design of Christianity, as may be re-  
 quired: The Evangelical way, by teaching orderly on all the Parts of our most Holy Religion, and by giving thereby a distinct View of their mutual Connection, and Dependence one upon another, is the best Method, and the only one, that is capable of being so taught.

It is the Duty of every Christian, who is desirous to be saved, to study the Salvation of his Soul, most think it necessary, except he can imagine it safe to take his Journey to Heaven blindfold, when he cannot think of getting, but to his last Home have on Earth, without his Eyes open.

It is the Duty of every Christian, who is desirous to be saved, to study the Salvation of his Soul, most think it necessary, except he can imagine it safe to take his Journey to Heaven blindfold, when he cannot think of getting, but to his last Home have on Earth, without his Eyes open.



## THE Fifth Lecture.

### Wherein I was made a Member of Christ.

**T**HE Preliminary Questions and Answers of your Catechism, do give you a general Account of all the Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, both of the Priviledges made over to us by God, and of the Conditions to be perform'd by us. And these Words, *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ*, expressing the First of those invaluable Priviledges made over unto us, in this Covenant, on God's Part; I shall therefore endeavour, as well as I can, to Explain and open to you, what they do Import.

Christ is in Scripture often styl'd, The Head of the Church, as particularly *Col. 1. 8. And he is the Head of the Body, the Church*, it is there said; and we are also styl'd, Members of this Body, the Church. Thus *Eph. 5. 30. We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*; so that to be a Member of Christ, is to be a Member, or Part of that Body, of which he is the Head, or to be a Member of Christ's Church: And to make it appear to you, how happy a Thing it is to be a Member of Christ's Church,

*A Member  
of Christ, is  
a Member  
of Christ's  
Church*

First, I will shew you, *What kind of Body the Church of Christ is.*

Secondly, *What it is to be a Member of it.* And then

Thirdly, *What exceeding great and invaluable Priviledges do belong to a Member of Christ's Church.*

And First, let us see, *What kind of Body that is, which is call'd the Church of Christ.* And tho' it does not belong to this Part of your Catechism, to give you a full account, of all that is Necessary to be known, concerning Christ's Church, which may more properly be refer'd to that Article of our Creed, *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*: However, since the High Priviledge and Dignity of any Member, as a Member, cannot be sufficiently understood, nor valued, without knowing the Nature and Excellency of that Body, of which it is a Member; I do therefore think my self obliged, in order to let you into a through Understanding of what is meant by *A Member of Christ's Church*, and of the greatness of that Priviledge, to speak something largely, in this Place, concerning the Nature and Constitution of the Church it self; and I shall therefore Define it, and also Explain, and prove each Part of the Definition, I shall give of it, as follows:

*A Definition  
of Christ's  
Church.*

The Church of Christ, is the universal Society of Christians, consisting both of Lawful Governours and Pastors, and also of the People of God committed to their Charge; and who are call'd forth out of the wicked World, by the Preaching of the Gospel, to a holy Profession and Calling; Namely, To Repentance from dead Works, to the Knowledge, Belief, and Service of the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to the Enjoyment of those inestimable Priviledges of the Gospel, viz. Most reasonable and excellent Laws to Conduct 'em to Heaven, Divine Grace and Assistance to Enable 'em to Obey those Laws, Pardon of Sins, upon Repentance, for the Violation of 'em, and Eternal Life and Happiness upon sincere Obedience to 'em. And who, to the End of being Incorporated into one Society, and of having God, to be their God, and they themselves his People, have Enter'd into Covenant with him, at Baptism, and do often Renew the same in the Lord's Supper, and are Incorporated thereby into one Body, subdivided, indeed, into several particular Bodies, and Churches, for the convenience of Government and Worship, but holding Communion with one another, in One and the same necessary and fundamental Points of Christianity, necessary to constitute the Church, under Jesus Christ, their superiour Head.

*The Church  
of Christ a  
well order'd  
Society,  
wherein some  
are Gover-  
nours, some  
Governed.*

And First, *The Church of Christ is the Society of Christians, consisting both of Lawful Governours and Pastors, and of the People of God committed to their Charge.* The Church of Christ is not a Confus'd, an Undigested, Headless Multitude, but a Regular and well-order'd Society. Hence, it is so often in the New Testament call'd, *The Kingdom of God*, as *Matth. 21. 31. The Kingdom of Christ*, as *Rev. 11. 15.* and *The Kingdom of Heaven*, *Matth. 11. 12.* and the Members of it, *Children of the Kingdom*, *Matth. 13. 38.* And *Eph. 2. 19, 20, 21.* The Members therefore are styl'd, *Fellow-Citizens, Members of a Household*, and Parts of a *Temple*, all which Expressions speak the Church of Christ to be a Regular Society of Men, combin'd and knit together by Laws, derived from some supreme Head and Governour. A Society, I say, wherein some are Superiours, some are Inferiours, some Governours, some Governed, and who altogether make up a well-compacted Body of Men. This last cited place out of the *Ephesians*, speaks the Thing out: *Now therefore, saith he to those, who are call'd into the Church, ye are no more Strangers and Forreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, and are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, that is Governours and Teachers, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the Building, fitly framed together, groweth up into an Holy Temple in the Lord.* Here, in this Description of the Church, you have Jesus Christ the chief Corner-stone, or Head of the Building, and Body; the Apostles and Prophets *Foundation-stones*, next unto him, and all the rest of Christians *Fellow-Citizens*, depending upon Jesus Christ, their supreme Head, and Others his subordinate Governours, and Teachers, next under him, and the Whole represented a well-compacted *Building*. Or, to make it yet more clear to you, *Eph. 4. 11, 12.* it is said, that *He gave some, Apostles: and some, Prophets: and some, Evangelists: and some, Pastors and Teachers,*

## LECT. V. *The Nature of Christ's Body, the Church.*

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*Teachers, for the work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.* So that upon the whole Matter, you see, that the Church of Christ is a well-order'd Society of Men.

And I do withal say, that in the Constitution of Christ's Church it is requir'd, that the *Governours and Pastors* thereof be *Lawful Ones*, that is, such as Christ has Commission'd to those Offices, because if they Usurp the sacred Offices of the Church, without being lawfully Ordain'd to the same, by the Successors of Christ and his Apostles, there will be very great danger of a Nullity in all their Ministerial Acts and Offices. You must all needs understand this, That those, who shall pretend to act in any Office, by the King's Authority, without a true Commission, the King will be so far from reckoning himself Oblig'd, to Confirm what they shall pretend to do in his Name, that he will punish the Presumption of such Officers, and those that adhere to 'em. And what reason have those to expect better Treatment from the King of Heaven, who shall either take upon themselves the Ministry, or receive an Ordination to it from those Hands, who have no Power to Confer it, or shall Adhere to such Usurping Ministers? To put the case as Favourably, as possibly we can, it does not appear, that God is under any Promise, or Engagement to hear the Prayers, that such Ministers shall put for the People, to convey the Graces of his Holy Spirit, by the Sacraments they shall Administer, or to Ratify the Pardon of those Penitents, whom they shall Absolve; whereas he has assured the Church, with respect to his lawful Ministers, that whatsoever of this Nature they shall do on Earth, shall be Establish'd in Heaven, *Matth. 16. 19.* And we are farther told by *St. Paul, Heb. 5. 4.* That under the Old Law, *No Man took the Honour of the Priesthood unto himself, but those who were called of God, as was Aaron.* And as to the Ministers of the Gospel, *St. Paul* does sharply demand, *Rom 10. 15. How any shall Preach the Gospel, except they be sent?* So that it does extremely concern all Christian People, that the Governours and Pastors of the Church be lawful Ones, such as are Sent, Ordain'd, and Commission'd thereunto.

And now, if you would be well satisfy'd, who are certainly Sent, Ordain'd and Commission'd to Govern and Teach in the Church; it is beyond all doubt, that Bishops are lawful Governours in the Church of Christ, and that those, who are Ordain'd by their Hands, have Commission to Preach the Gospel, and Administer the Sacraments, because they do undoubtedly derive their Power by an uninterrupted Succession from Christ and his Apostles; for our Saviour, when he sent forth his Disciples into the World, to Preach the Gospel, and to gather a Church, he told 'em, *Mat. 28. 20. He would be with them, or stand by 'em in giving Authority and Success to their Ministry, to the end of the World;* and yet for certain, for 1500 Years he did Authorize no other, than those Episcopally Ordain'd, as the Histories of all Ages of the Church do testify; so that it concerns you, who have not that Necessary to plead for not-Enjoying Bishops, and an Episcopal Clergy, as our Sister Churches Beyond-Sea think they have; It concerns you, I say, as you would be secure of being within the Pale of a right Constituted Gospel-Church, not to separate

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your



your selves from this, wherein you are undoubtedly under a true Gospel Ministry. But to proceed

*The Church is the universal Society of Christians, taking in men of all Nations, as well of the Gentiles, as of the Jews.*

Secondly, The Church of Christ is the *Universal Society of Christians*. The Christian Church is not now confin'd to one particular Place, or Nation, as the Jewish was; but is *Catholic* and Universal, spread over all the Face of the Earth, and taking in all Nations of Men, as well those, who were *Gentiles*, as those, who were *Jews*: For Christ is our Peace, and hath made both One, and hath broken down the middle Wall of Partition between us, Eph. 2. 14. The Synagogue of the Jews consisted of one Nation, and the more solemn Parts of their publick Worship, were confin'd to one Place, as you will see, Deut. 12. 5, 6. So that it was rightly said, Joh. 4. 20. Tho' the Woman of Samaria did Schismatically question it, That Jerusalem was the place wherein men ought to Worship; For the Temple was the only place in which the Sacrifices could be Offer'd, and wherein the Priests could perform their daily Ministration; so that the Church, under the Law, was an Inclosure divided from all the World besides. But our Saviour, at the opening of the Christian Church, assures the Woman, who demanded of him, *Whether in that Mountain, near to Samaria, whereon they both stood, or in Jerusalem, were the place where men ought to Worship*, he assures her, *The hour cometh when neither in that Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, they should worship the Father*; that is, not there only, nor any where in so carnal a manner, Joh. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23. But as St. Peter tells us, now under the Gospel, *In every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him*, Act. 10. 35. And therefore our Saviour, when he sent forth his Disciples into the World, to Preach the Gospel, and to gather a Church, he commanded them, Mar. 16. 15. saying, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature*. From whence we find them, in Revelations 5. 9. *Crying unto the Lamb, Thou wast slain, and hast Redeemed us unto God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*. So, that whereas concerning the Jewish Church it was, that God declar'd formerly, Exod. 19. 5, 6. That in keeping his Covenant, they should be a *peculiar Treasure unto him, above all People, a Kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation*. Now under the Gospel it is declared, 1 Pet. 2. 9. with respect to Persons of all Nations, who shall come within the Christian Church, that they are a *Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a peculiar People, that they should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath call'd them out of Darkness, into his marvellous Light*: But then, I say, the Church of Christ, tho' it takes in Persons of all Nations, yet it is still to be a *Holy Nation, a peculiar People*. For tho' it be spread over all the World, yet

*It consists of such, who are call'd out of the World, by the Breaching of the Gospel, to a Holy Profession and Calling.*

Thirdly, It consists only of such, who are *Call'd forth out of the wicked World, by the Breaching of the Gospel, to a Holy Profession and Calling*. It is not either Jews, or Gentiles, whilst they continue such, that are of the Church of Christ; but it consists of those, who are *Call'd out from amongst both*. The Church is a selected People, separated from the Prophane part of the World, to be a *Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People*. To understand which, you must know, that the World, at the Time of our Saviour's coming into it, was grown to a sad pass, and was miserably

bly Estrang'd from God. The World, indeed, soon after the Creation, began to fall off from God, and to take part with the Devil: But by the time that our Saviour came into the Flesh, the Apostle declares, *Rom. 3. 11, 12.* concerning as well Jews, as Gentiles, that *there was none that understood, there was none that sought after God; that they were all gone out of the way, they were all become unprofitable, that there was none that did good, no not one.* Particularly, as to the Gentiles, they were charg'd, *Rom. 11. 23, 24. 28, 29.* to have *Changed the Glory of the insurruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping things, and were thereupon given up to Uncleaness, and vile Affections; and as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, they were given up to a reprobate Mind, being fill'd with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, &c.* And as to the Jews, they had in a manner wholly voided the Force of God's Laws, by their false Interpretations, as you will see in our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, which cost him so much Pains to clear the Text from their false Glosses, and to shew them the full Extent of their Duty, contain'd in the Law. This was the State of both Jews and Gentiles, at that time: And therefore did Christ come to *Call out* such, as would Obey his Calls, to *Call 'em out*, I say, *out of the wicked World, to a Holy Profession and Calling;* for which reason he is said to have *Saved us, and Called us with an Holy Calling,* 2 Tim. 1. 9. and in a great many Places of Scripture, Christians are therefore styl'd, the *Called;* and *Joh. 17. 6.* they are said to be such, whom the *Father had given our Saviour out of the world,* and tho' *they are in the world,* ver. 11. that is, *Live in the World, yet they are not of the world,* ver. 16.

True it is, It is not every Member of the Visible Church, that does effectually Obey this Holy Calling, and in his Life and Conversation, shews himself not to be of the World; and therefore it is, that the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the Church, is liken'd *Matth. 13. 24.* to a *Field*, in which Wheat and Tares grow up together until the Harvest; and to a *Net* that was cast into the Sea, and gather'd of every Kind: But however, tho' too many of those, of whom the Church is compos'd, are in their own Persons Ungodly, yet, I say,

Fourthly, They are *Called, by the Preaching of the Gospel, to a Holy Profession and Calling,* as Namely, to Repentance from Dead Works; for so our Saviour says, *He came to Call the Sinners to Repentance,* Matth. 9. 13. And thus also his Apostles *Preacht unto Men, that they should turn from the Vanities of Idol-worship, unto the Living God, which made Works. Heaven, and Earth, and the Sea, and all Things therein,* Acts 14. 15. which is an Instance of Repentance, that the Gentile World were particularly Call'd to.

And then as to the *Knowledge and Belief of the only True God, and Jesus Christ;* the distinguishing Character given of the Church of *To the Know-Christ,* *Joh. 17. 2.* is, that they are such, whom the Father *hath ledge, Belief given him (or given him out of the world, as it is ver. 6.) that they and Service might have Eternal Life;* and *this,* he tells us, *ver. 3. is Eternal Life;* or the way by which we can only come by Eternal Life, *That we Know the only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.* The Gentiles they Knew not the only True God, but Own'd and Wor-ship'd

I.

Repentance

from Dead

Works.

II.

To the Know-

ledge, Belief

and Service

of the One

True God,

Father, Son,

and Holy

Ghost.



ship'd many Gods, and did Sacrifice to Devils, 1 Cor. 10. 20. And as for the Jews, tho' they Believ'd, indeed, in the only True God; yet they Acknowledg'd not his Son Jesus Christ, whom he had sent, to be also the *True God*, as he is call'd, 1 Joh. 5. 20. And now both these Enemies to Truth, our Saviour Calls *the world*, Joh. 17. and in Opposition to both tells us, *ver. 3. that this is Life Eternal, to Know the only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.* So that the Church of Christ are such, who are peculiarly Separated from the World, to the Knowledge and Belief of the Only True God.

And they are such also, who have been Baptiz'd into the *Knowledge, Belief, and Service of Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in that One Godhead*, Matth. 28. 19. And particularly they are such as are *Baptized into the Name of Jesus*, Acts 19. 5. that is, into the Belief, that Jesus is the Christ, or Mediatour between God and Man, for this is the great Fundamental Doctrine of Christianity, as the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 3. 11. assuring us, that *Other Foundation can no Man lay, than that Jesus is the Christ.* And he, that *denyeth that Jesus is the Christ, is the great Liar, and an Anti-Christ*, 1 Joh. 2. 22. But, *who-soever believeth, that Jesus is the Christ, is Born of God*, 1 Joh. 5. 1. that is, is Adopted into the Christian Church and Family.

III. Fifthly, And as Christians are a Society of Persons, call'd out of the World to Repentance, Faith, and Gospel-Obedience; so to the *Enjoyment of those Inestimable Priviledges of the Gospel*, viz. 1. Most Reasonable and Excellent Laws, given by a most Great and Gracious Governour, to Condu& 'em to Heaven, *Laws writ in their Minds, and in their Hearts*, Heb. 8. 10. that is, Laws, which are for the most part, the very Dictates of natural Reason. 2. They are such, as are Priviledg'd with having great Measures of Divine Grace, and Assistance to enable 'em to Obey those Laws, for, whereas the *Law was given by Moses, Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*, Joh. 1. 17. and is the Priviledge of the Church of Christ under the Gospel. 3. They are such, who have Assurance of Pardon of Sins, upon their Repentance for the Transgression of those Laws, for, with Respect to those of the Christian Church, God is pleas'd to say, *Heb. 8. 12. I will be Merciful to their Unrighteousness, and their Sins and Iniquities will I remember no more.* And lastly, As to the Eternal Life and Happiness, Christ does assure us, *Joh. 17. 2. that The Father has given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as are given him, or are given him out of the world, ver. 6.* that is, that he has a Power of conferring the Rewards in Heaven, to as many as come within the Pale of the Church, if they do withal live in Obedience to its Laws and Constitutions. Thus is the Church of Christ a Society of Men, call'd forth of the World, as to a most Holy Profession and Calling, so to the Enjoyment of most singular Priviledges.

*The Church are such, who to the End of being Incorporated into One Society, and of having God, to be their God, and they themselves to the End of his People, have Enter'd into Covenant with him.* It is the Royal Charter granted by the King, to the Members of a Corporation, or City, whereby they have certain Priviledges granted them from the King, and wherein they are Tied to discharge certain Duties to him, and to One another, that makes 'em, of a confus'd Multitude, to become



Lect. V. *The Nature of Christ's Body, the Church.*

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become a Corporation, or regulated Society. And those who stand out, and will not accept of those Priviledges, nor oblige themselves to their several Duties, shall not be reputed of that Corporation, nor receive any Advantages from it. And so it is here with that Society, which is call'd the Church of Christ. It is the Covenant of Grace, granted us by the King of Heaven, wherein we have the most inestimable Priviledges, those contain'd in the Gospel, graciously Ensurd unto us, and most reasonable Duties both to God and Man, required of us, that do embody and join us into one Spiritual Society, the Church; and those who will not Enter into such a Covenant with God, are *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world,* Eph. 2. 12. But those who have join'd themselves in Covenant with Him, are *No more Strangers and Forreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God,* ver. 19.

And as by being United in one Covenant, Christians are Incorporated into one Society; so by the same Means it comes to pass also, that they have God to be their God, peculiarly, and they become his People. Thus Heb. 8. 10. *This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, that is, in the time of the Gospel, I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People.* It is the Nature of all Covenants, to Unite the Parties Covenanting together, and to give to each Party an Interest in the other. *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine,* Ezek. 16. 8. So that by having Enter'd into Covenant with God, we are Entitled to his particular Protection and Care over us, and we give to him thereby a new and stronger Claim to our Obedience.

Seventhly, And Christians are thus Enter'd into Covenant with God, and thereby made Members of Christ's Church *in their Baptism*: For as all the Members of a Corporation, are not usually made Members of that Society, without some certain Solemnities; so it pleased God, that no One should be Enter'd into Christ's Church, and be made a Partaker of the Priviledges of it, without that outward Rite of *Baptism*; for so we find, that when our Saviour sent his Apostles to Found, and Build the Church, they receiv'd, as a Commission to call forth out of the World, a Church, by the Preaching of the Gospel: So an Appointment to Incorporate all Men therein, by Baptism; *Go and Teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* Matth. 28. 19. And hence, 1 Cor. 12. 13. it is said, *That we are all Baptiz'd into one Body, or admitted by Baptism into one Church.*

I.  
*In Baptism.*

Eighthly, And they are Appointed to *Renew the same, by Feasting often together at the Lord's Supper.* This was anciently, and is still the usual Method of Uniting more closely together the Members of any Society or Corporation, their Feasting often together at one common Table; and for this Reason, amongst others it is, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is Appointed in the Church of Christ: So the 1 Cor. 10. 17. it is said, *That we being many are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.*

II.  
*To Renew it at the Lord's Supper.*

Ninthly, And now upon all these foremention'd Accounts, the Church of Christ is *One Body.* Thus Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one one Body.*

M

*The Church's Body*

Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one Hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith; one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all; where you see, that because all Christians are call'd out of the World, into one Hope of their Calling; or to the Enjoyment of the same Priviledges, to one Faith, or to Believe one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, express here by one Spirit, one Lord, one God, and Father of all; and because Incorporated by one Baptism; or by the Use of the same Sacraments, that therefore they are one Body. The Covenant of Grace, that great Charter, whereby we are Incorporated into one Society, is One and the same amongst all Christians, containing the same Duties to be perform'd by all, and promising to every One that performs those Conditions, the same Priviledges. And all Men are every where admitted and continued in it by the same Sacramental Solemnities, and therefore the Church founded upon, and Incorporated by that Covenant, must needs be One.

Subdivided  
into several  
particular  
Bodies and  
Churches.

I.  
For the con-  
venience of  
Government,  
into Diocesan  
Churches.

Tenthly, This one Body or Society, the Church, true it is, is subdivided into several particular Bodies or Churches; both for the convenience of Discipline, and Government, and also for the convenience of Divine Worship. For the convenience of Government it was anciently divided into Diocesan Churches, wherein, because no one Man is able to Govern so vast a Body, as is the whole Church of God, each Bishop had his particular Flock, arising but of one City, and the Parts adjoining, to Oversee and to Govern. Hence we read, *Rev. 2. and 3. chap.* of the Church of *Ephesus*, the Church of *Smirna*, the Church of *Pergamus*, the Church of *Thyatira*, the Church of *Sardis*, the Church of *Philadelphia*, and the Church of *Laodicea*, all which were so many Cities in the lesser *Asia*; and the Bishops of those Churches are Styl'd, the *Angels* of those Churches, in those Second and Third Chapters of *Revelations*. And the Elders, or Bishops of these Churches, probably it was, that St. Paul sent for, to meet him at *Miletus*, *Act. 20. 17.* and to whom he gave that solemn Charge, *ver. 21. 28. To take heed unto themselves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers, to feed the Church of God, that is, to Govern and Teach the Church of Christ, which he had Purchased with his own Blood.*

II.  
For the con-  
venience of  
Worship, into  
particular  
Congregati-  
ons.

And as for the Convenience of Government, the Church of Christ was anciently divided into Diocesan Churches, in which Constitution of the Church, each City has its Bishop to govern and direct the Affairs of the Church: So for the Convenience of Divine Worship, and because all the Members of a City, and the Parts adjoining, could not meet together in the same Place, was each Bishop's See farther divided, into particular Congregations and Assemblies, under the Care of its respective Pastors: Hence as to the Church of *Corinth* we gather, that, as it was but one Church; in regard it had but one Bishop, or Governour, for St. Paul directs his Epistle thus, *Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, 1 Cor. 1. 2.* yet in that one Episcopal Church, being there were several Congregations met together, for the Worship of God, we read, *1 Cor. 14. 34. of Churches in the Plural Number, and this particular Order of the Apostle, about the Decency of Divine Service, in those particular Churches, or Congregations; Namely, that Women should keep Silence in the Churches.* Thus, true it is,



it is, the Church, which is but one Body, is Subdivided into several particular Bodies, or Churches; both for the convenience of Discipline and Government, and also for the convenience of Divine Worship: But however those several particular Churches were *United into one Body, by one Covenant*; for the Church of Corinth, the Church of Ephesus, Smyrna, &c. were all called to the same Holy Profession and Calling, to the same Faith in God, and to the same Privileges of Grace, Pardon, and Happiness, as the whole Church, and were admitted into that same Covenant, by the same Sacraments, as the whole Catholick Church was; by which means *They kept the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of Peace*, Eph. 4. 3. And each of those particular Congregations, also in the Church of Corinth, for Instance, were United also to the Church of God, in that City, by holding no other than the Doctrine Establish'd in that Church: And by being United thereby to that particular Part of Christ's Church, they were United also to the whole Body of Christ, and made up but one Body, *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body; so also is Christ, or the Christian Church, for by one Spirit, we are all Baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 12, 13. So that the Church of Christ, you see, tho' divided into many Branches, or Members, is but one Body in the whole, because United in, and by One and the same Covenant of Grace: And also in the

*But however United, by one Covenant, into one Body.*

Eleventh Place; Because all the several particular Churches are to *Hold Communion with each other*. Now as to that Communion, which the Members of Christ's Church held with one another in the Apostle's Times; (and sure their's must be a Pattern of Church-Communion) we are told, *Act. 2. 42.* that it consisted in this, That *They continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.* They continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, that is, they continued constantly, and also steddily, without swerving aside by Separation, in Hearing the Apostles Teach. They continued also stedfastly in *Breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, that is, they Join'd constantly and frequently in the same Prayers and Sacraments. And lastly, They continued stedfastly in the same *Fellowship*, by which is principally meant in the Original, both here, and in several other Places of the Scripture, that Communication of charitable Assistances, that all the Members did afford each other, according to their several Wants and Necessities: For whether any Sister-Church were under Persecutions, or any particular Christians did labour with Want, the other Members of the Body did Communicate to the Relief of either. And the Apostle did also appoint that to be done in the Christian Assemblies, when they met together to Communicate in Hearing, Prayers, and Sacraments, ordering, that *The first day of the Week, which was the Day of their Publick Assemblies, every one should lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, to this Purpose*, 1 Cor. 16. 2. So that if *One Member suffered, all the Members suffered with it, and there was no Schism in the Body, but the Members had the same care one of another*, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26.

*As also by holding Communion with each other, in Hearing the Word, in Common-Prayers, Sacraments, and in affording mutual Assistances.*



In a word: Such was the Communion, which the Members of the Church held with each other, in those Days, which made it one Church, that there was no such thing as any separate Meetings, from those of the Apostles, and their lawful Successors, the Bishops and Pastors of the Flock, set up under the Pretence of better Edification, and for more pure Administrations of Ordinances. No, no sooner did any attempt to make such a Schism, but he was accounted a Gangreen'd Member, and cut off from the Body for so doing. And so much was mutual Kindness and Charity to be the distinguishing Character of Christ's Church, that our Saviour declar'd, *Joh. 13. 35. That by this should all men know his Disciples, that they had love one for another.*

*The Church  
United into  
one Body,  
under Jesus  
Christ its su-  
preme Head.*

*Christ a Po-  
litical Head  
of the Church.*

And now Lastly, It only remains, to compleat this my Explication of Christ's Church, to shew you, That this whole Society of Men, call'd forth out of the World, to such Duties and Priviledges, as has been spoke, is to be United into one Body, as has been declar'd, *under Jesus Christ its supreme Head.* Every Society of Men must have some supreme Head to keep it, both in Being, and Order; and Christ is so much, to all Intents and Purposes, the Head of the Church, that there is no respect, in which any thing is the Head of the Body, in which Christ is not, in like manner, the Head of the Church. And *First*, There is the *Political Head* in every Kingdom, which is the Prince, that gives Laws to his People, and Heads and Protects them against their Enemies. And such a Head is Christ in that Spiritual Kingdom, the Church of God, *Whom the Father having Raised from the Dead, did put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.* And therefore pursuant to this Power, which was *Given him in Heaven, and in Earth*, to give Laws to Mankind, did he Commission his Disciples, and send them forth into the World, to Proclaim his Laws, to *Teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had Commanded them;* assuring them withal, that *Lo he would be with them always, even unto the End of the World, Matth. 28. 18, 19, 20.* that is, That he would be ever with 'em, to Head and Protect 'em against their Adversaries.

*Secondly*, There is also a *Domestick Head*, viz. the *Husband, in respect of the Wife;* and so likewise is Christ the Head of the Church, and he is the Saviour of the Body, *Eph. 5. 23.* And, indeed, the Holy Spirit does love to Represent him as such a Head, as also by the Title of a *Shepherd* over the Flock, to signify the Gentleness of his Government, and the Sweetness, and Goodness of his Laws, tending all for the Good of those he Governs.

And *Thirdly*, There is the *Natural Head* of the Body, which is the Fountain of Life and Spirit, from whence it is deriv'd into all the Parts of the Body, to enable and enliven all the Members thereof, to discharge their several Offices and Duties: And in Allusion to this, is Christ said to be the *Mystical Head* of the Church, *from whom all the Body, by Joynts and Bands, having Nourishment ministred, increaseth with the Increase of God, Col. 2. 19.*

*Christ the  
Mystical  
Head of the  
Church.*

And thus I have at length sufficiently, in order to my Design of Explaining this Article, *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ*, shew'd you,

you, *What kind of Body the Church of Christ is.* And, by the By, from what has been said, it does appear, That the Church of Christ is a Spiritual Kingdom, put up in the World by God, on purpose to reduce Man to his due Allegiance to his Maker, and to deitroy the Dominion of Satan, which he had so long Usurpt over Mankind. It is a Kingdom, as it consists of inferior Governours and Subjects, combined together, by special Laws of Allegiance, to the Sovereign King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and by Priviledges granted, by that Supreme Head and Governour, to such his Subjects; and therefore it is so often, in the Scripture, call'd a *Kingdom*: But you see withal, it is a Spiritual Kingdom, by the Nature and Design of which, God is to Rule in the Hearts and Spirits of Men, and therefore it is, all over the New Testament, call'd the *Kingdom of God*, the *Kingdom of Christ*; For Christ does Reign and Rule therein by his Gospel, as the Laws of that Kingdom, over the Spirits of Men; and those are the People or Subjects of this Kingdom, who own him for their King, and his Gospel for the Laws of this Kingdom; and who do give themselves up wholly, both Body, Soul and Spirit, to be Governed by those Laws.

*The Church  
of Christ, a  
Spiritual  
Kingdom.*

And the Church is also often call'd in the Holy Scripture, the *Kingdom of Heaven*, for indeed it is not a Kingdom of this World, supported with outward State, and armed Forces, in order to promote, and to secure from those who would Invade 'em, our temporal Interests; *If my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I should not be deliver'd to the Jews,* Joh. 18. 36. but it is a Kingdom, or Society of Men, associated together, and List'd to Fight under Christ, the *Great Captain of our Salvation*, against much more formidable Enemies, than any Earthly Potentates; *Even against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against Spiritual Wickedness in high Places,* Eph. 6. 12. that is, against the Devil, and his wicked Angels, who would despoil us of our Heavenly Inheritance. List'd, I say, to fight under Jesus Christ, the Great Captain of our Salvation, for so he is call'd *Heb. 2. 10.* and to our Comfort, who are to fight under him, he has already Spoiled these *Principalities and Powers, and has made a shew of them openly upon the Cross, triumphing over them in it,* Col. 2. 15. So that our Work is in a great measure already done under his Conduct, for he himself has divested the Devils of much of their Power, he has thrown 'em out of their Temples, silenc'd their Oracles, and does daily, by his Assistances, enable us to Foil 'em. So that the Church of Christ, you see, is a Spiritual Kingdom.

But yet notwithstanding, that this Society, the Church, is a *Spiritual Kingdom*, both as its Laws are Spiritual, reaching to the Government of the Inward Man; and also, as it is a Body List'd under a Spiritual King, to fight against Spiritual Enemies: Yet however, from what has been said, it does appear, that the Church, or Kingdom of Christ, is a *Visible Society* of Men, consisting of such who make an Outward and Visible Profession of Allegiance to Christ, having visibly, by an Outward Sacrament, Enter'd into Covenant with him, and being such as do visibly Communicate together in his Holy Ordinances. And therefore it is not only of such who by an inward, real, and true Faith are United to Christ, that

*But yet notwithstanding  
a Visible Society.*



the Church and Kingdom of God, in this World, does consist, but of all those outward Professors of Christianity, who, by the Sacrament of Baptism, have Enter'd into Covenant with God. Such indeed as besides an outward Covenanting, (which is certainly necessary) are Renew'd withal to the Image of God in Knowledge, Righteousness, and true Holiness, are the only Persons of which the *Invisible Church*, as it is call'd, does consist in this World, these perhaps being meant by the *Little Flock*, Luk. 12. 32. and of such only will the whole Church, in the World to come, be made up, being, of *The many that are Called, the few that are Chosen*, Matth. 20. 16. But if we consider the Church of Christ in its full Latitude, and in that imperfect State wherein it now is, on this side Heaven; many Hypocrites and bad Men, as well as truly sincere and good Christians, do belong to it, for the Church of Christ, here on Earth, is compar'd, Matth. 13. 24, 25. to a *Field*, which contains *Wheat and Tares growing up together*, and to a *Net*, ver. 47. wherein there are *Fish, both good and bad*. Such you see is the Nature and Temper of that Body of Christ, his Church; concerning which I thought it requisite to give you a more than ordinary full account, even in this place, before we come to the Article, *I Believe the Holy Catholick Church*, because that otherwise it cannot be so well Apprehended,

*What it is to  
be a Member  
of Christ's  
Church.*

Secondly, *What it is to be a Member of Christ's Church*; which now the way being so far clear'd, I shall in few words shew you. And from what has been said it does easily now appear, that a true Member of the Church of Christ, is one who belongs to that Society of Christians which consists of Lawful Governours and Pastors, and of the People of God committed to their Charge, the one Minist'ring in Holy Things, and the other Partaking thereof at their Hands. He is not a Member of that narrow and enclos'd Society of Worshipers, the Jewish Synagogue, who by their peculiar Rites and Ways of Worship, were confin'd to one Nation and Place, no more than he is one of the Gentile World at large; but he is one, who either himself was call'd, or is descended of those who were call'd, from out of the wicked World of Jews and Gentiles, to a Holy Profession and Calling, viz. To the Belief of the One True God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; as also to Repentance from dead Works, to serve Him the only Living and True God. And he is call'd, as to Faith and Repentance, so to enjoy the Priviledges of the Gospel, and the Rewards of such Faith and Repentance; namely, Most Reasonable and Excellent Laws and Ordinances, to Conduct him to Heaven, with a plentiful measure of Divine Grace and Assistance also, convey'd by those Ordinances, to Enable him to Obey those Laws; and he is one, who to the End of being of that Society of Men, the Christian Church, and of having God a Friend to him, and he himself a Servant of God's, has solemnly Enter'd into Covenant with God in his Baptism, and continues often to Renew the same in the Lord's Supper, because the Divine Goodness does in both Vouchsafe to make over and ensure to him those exceeding Great and Invaluable Priviledges, and most singular Benefits, as well as he on the other side, does solemnly Engage to yield himself up to the Service and Obedience of God. Farther yet, a Member



Lect.V. *What it is to be a Member of the Church.*

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ber of Christ's Church is one, who is not only United to the Catholick Church in and by one Covenant, that is, in the Profession of the same Faith and Repentance, and in the Enjoyment of the same Priviledges, and in the use of the same Sacraments. But also he maintains this Union therewith, by *Communicating* with that particular Part of the Catholick Church where he lives, and whereof he is a Member in particular; by communicating, I say therewith, in Hearing, together with the rest of the Body, the same Doctrine, in Joyning in the same common Prayers, and receiving the same Holy Sacraments; and Lastly, in Receiving from, and Administering mutual Assistances to the Members of that Body, wherever dispers'd, or however distress'd over the Face of the whole World, as there shall be occasion. And lastly, a Member of Christ's Church is One, who belongs to that universal Society of Men, call'd out of the World, to such Duties and Priviledges, as has been spoke, and is United into one Body, by the same means, as has been declar'd, under Jesus Christ its supreme Head. And if you consider him as a Member of the Kingdom of Christ, he is one who is *Delivered by God from the power of Darknes, and is translated into the Kingdom of his dear Son*, Col. 1. 13. that is, he is one of those, who is deliver'd by the Gospel, from under the Tyranny of Satan, under which the whole World was held Captive, and is made a Subject to the Gracious Government of the Son of God. From what has been said, it does plainly appear, I think, that such, and such a One only, is a true Member of Christ's Church.

And in the Sence of your Catechism, which teaches all to Answer, That in their Baptism they are *made Members of Christ*; every Person who has been admitted into the Church by Baptism, is a Member of Christ, and shall continue such till he is cut off by the just Sentence of those Governours in the Church, who have the *Power of the Keys*, to Receive in, or Shut out; or till he cuts off himself from that mystical Body, by a *causeless Schism and Separation*, from any of its sound Parts.

Every Baptized Person, I say, is a Member of the Visible Church. Every Baptized Person So the Apostle expressly speaks, Gal. 3. 27. assuring us, that *As many* as have been Baptized into Christ, that is, the Christian Church, *have put on Christ*, or have put on that Relation to Christ that Members have to the Body. True it is, amongst those, that are Incorporated by Baptism into the Church, many do prove but very unsound and unfruitful Members; such as, tho' they are admitted into that Holy Society, in order to their Edification, and through Conversion, by the means of those Holy Ordinances, which Christ has appointed in in his Church, do yet continue to be very bad Men, both in their Principles and Practices. Hence it is said, *Matth. 22. 10.* that of those who are called into the Wedding, that is, the Church, by the Servants or Officers of the Bridegroom, that is, Christ, there are as well *Bad as Good*. Yet as appears from that, and many the like Parables of our Saviour, concerning the Materials and Constitution of his Church, even such bad Men, when once Baptized into it, are Members of it.

And shall continue to be Members of it, till such time as they are cut off by the just Sentence of those who have the Power of the *And shall continue such,* Keys,

will cut off by  
the just Sen-  
tence of those  
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Keys, to Re-  
ceive in, or  
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Keys, to Receive in, or Shut out. For this you are to know, that Christ has given his Apostles, and their Successors in the Government of the Church, a *Church Authority*, consisting in *Receiving in*, or *Shutting out of the Church*. To *Receive into the Church*, is to Admit such as make a Profession of Christianity; to Admit 'em, I say, by the Sacrament of Baptism, to all the outward Acts of Communion. To *Shut, or cast out of the Church*, is by Excommunication to Exclude unworthy Persons from that Priviledge of Church-Communion, to deny 'em the Liberty to Pray, or Receive the Sacrament, or perform any Religious Office in the Publick Assemblies of the Church. And now accordingly has Christ appointed the Bishops and Governours of his Church, to be as Shepherds to *Oversee the Flock*, as you will find, *Act. 20. 28.* and has given 'em *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Matth. 16. 19.* that is, Authority, as to Admit into the Church, by *Baptism*, all who make a Profession of Christianity; so to Expel out of it, by *Excommunication*, all those scabbed Members thereof, who contrary to such their Holy Profession, either by their pestilent Heresies, or by their scandalous Ill Lives, are Unworthy of it, and in danger to Infect it. If they Preach, or anywise propagate any pestilent Heresy, contrary to the fundamental Truths of Christianity, let their Persons be never so acceptable, upon the account of some shining Vertues of Charity, or their Doctrines never so Plausible, as pretending to Reason, they ought not to be spared. *Tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be Accursed*; that is, Excommunicated, and cut off from Church-Communion, *Gal. 1. 8.* So far was this Blessed Apostle, so Zealous for the Glory of his Saviour, from sparing others, that he would not have himself be suffer'd to continue in the Communion of the Church, were it possible he should be guilty of propagating Heresy: And so likewise is any Person, guilty of a notorious and scandalous Ill Life. Why then also are the Governours of Christ's Church commanded, *To put away from 'em that wicked person*, *1 Cor. 5. 13*? And all the Members of the mystical Body, are so far bound to take notice of such an *Excommunication*, as to disown and discard such a Person, and to have no Society with him, so *1 Corinthians, 5. 11.* *If any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, after Excommunication, they were not to Eat.* In such Cases as these, indeed, an Evil Member becomes no Member, and is to be to the rest as a Heathen Man, and a Publican, that is, one that is out of the Church, *Matth. 18. 17.*

Or till he cuts  
himself off,  
by a causeless  
Schism and  
Separation,  
from any of  
its sound  
Parts.

And so likewise is he, who cuts himself off from that mystical Body the Church, by a causeless Schism, and Separation from any of its sound Parts. I say, any of its sound Parts, for wherever there is a true Church, if there be nothing in its Doctrine nor Worship that is sinful, every Person is bound to *Continue stedfastly in the Doctrine, Prayers, and Sacraments, and Fellowship* of that Church, as in the Apostle's times they did, *Act. 2. 42.* and to reject the Communion of all other Parties and Sects of Christians, or otherwise he will cut off himself from the Church, and will cease to be a real Member of it, as the Finger ceases to be of the Body, when it is cut

Lect.V. *What it is to be a Member of the Church.*

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cut off from the Arm. Thus, in either of these cases, indeed, shall a Person dis-continue to be a *Member* of Christ's Church; when either he is Cut off, by the just Sentence of those Governours in the Church, who have the *Power of the Keys*, to *Receive in*, or *Shut out*, or when he Cuts himself off by a *causeless Separation and Schism*, from any of its sound Parts.

But otherwise, all Persons who have Enter'd into Covenant with God, and have been Admitted into it by Baptism, are Members of Christ's Church, (as has been already sufficiently prov'd, and need not again be repeated :) And so shall Partake of those exceeding great Priviledges, which belong to the Members of it; which what, and how great they are, I come next to declare unto you.

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## THE Sixth Lecture.

**Wherein I was made a Member of Christ.**

**B**Y the Church of Christ, as has been shew'd, is meant a *Visible Society* of Men, call'd forth of the World, to the Knowledge, Belief and Service of the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and Professing the same in Opposition to the Service of Satan, and all false Gods whatsoever, and also to all those vicious and immoral Practices, which did so notoriously accompany the Pagan Worship; and indeed professing an utter Hatred to all Sin, of any kind. And it is a Society, as has been shew'd you, combin'd into one Covenant with God, by outward Sacraments, and holding Communion with each other, under Jesus Christ its Head.

And a Member of Christ's Church, you have also seen, is every One, who has been Enter'd into this visible Society of Holy Men, and into this Covenant with God, by Baptism, and who holds a constant Communion, without swerving aside into separate Assemblies, with that Particular, True, and Orthodox Church, whereof he is a Member, and in whose Verge he lives. Every such Person, I have shew'd you, is a Member of Christ's Church, and will continue such, except his Lawful Governours therein, should cut him off by a just Excommunication, or he should cut off himself by a sinful and unnecessary Separation.

And now having sufficiently made it appear, in the former Discourse to this purpose, First, what kind of Body that is, which is call'd the Church of Christ, and also, Secondly, having shew'd you, what it is to be a Member of it; it will be now requisite, that I should also Demonstrate to you, (in order to make you sufficiently sensible of which, the Two former Points have been so largely treated of) Thirdly, what vast and invaluable *Priviledges* do accordingly belong to every Member of Christ's visible Church. I say, to *Every Member of Christ's visible Church*, for it is not my Business here to Enlarge on the more peculiar Priviledges of those, who are styl'd Members of the *Invisible Church*, who are the sincere Part only of Christ's visible Church. Those perhaps, I may also declare in few words by the By. But the Priviledges, which I am here concern'd to Treat upon, and to Acquaint you with, are such as belong to every Member of the Church I have been speaking of.

And

Lect. VI. *The Privileges of being &c.*

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And these Privileges, which do peculiarly belong to all the Members of Christ's Church, as they are the Members of such a Body, whereof he is the Head, are these Two: First, a most reasonable and excellent Body of Religion and Laws, together with most profitable and edifying Institutions and Ordinances, appointed by Him, our supreme Head and Governour, to conduct us to Heaven. Secondly, a sufficient measure of Divine Grace and Assistance, deriv'd down upon us, from Him our mystical Head, and convey'd by those his Ordinances, to Enable us to conform to his Religion, and Obey those Laws.

*The Privileges of our being Members of Christ's Church.*

And the first Great Privilege, which does peculiarly belong to all the Members of Christ's visible Church, as they are the Members of such a Society, *Is a most reasonable and excellent Body of Religion and Laws, together with most profitable and edifying Institutions and Ordinances, given and appointed us by him our supreme Head and Governour, to Conduct us to Heaven.*

*I. A most excellent Body of Religion, Laws, and Ordinances.*

We do enjoy, I say, thereby, *The Privilege of a most reasonable and excellent Body of Religion and Laws, far exceeding what any other People have ever enjoy'd, to Conduct us to Heaven.* This is clearly to be seen, Heb. 8. 8, 9, 10, 11. where God himself finding Fault with the Jewish Covenant and Laws, as what could not make the Comers thereunto Perfect, saith, *Behold, the days come, when I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the Covenant, that I made with their Fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Laws into their Minds, and write them in their Hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People. And they shall not teach every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest;* which remarkable Words, spoke first by the Prophet Jeremy, as a Prophecy of the most happy State of the Christian Church, by reason of the most excellent Covenant and Laws that would be given it, beyond what was the State of the Jewish, do import, that even the Jewish Covenant was not in it self Perfect, and such as could not be better'd and improv'd, tho' it had God for its Author; (and sure then those Superstitions, which derive themselves from no better Authors than the Devil, and wicked Impostors, must be very bad) but that the Christian Covenant, and Laws have such an inward, essential Goodness in them, that a Man's own Reason would prompt him to Approve 'em as Best, and most Excellent; there being none of its Doctrines, but what are highly agreeable to the best Reason of Man, and all its Precepts being no other, than the Law written in every Man's own Heart.

*The Christian Religion, and Laws, far exceed the Pagan, Mahometan, or Jewish.*

And indeed the Christian Religion, whether we consider it, as compar'd with the Pagan, or Mahometan Superstition, and Jewish Dispensation, or in its own Nature, it is a most singular Institution, and Body of Laws, and such as we ought to Esteem it our very great Happiness and Advantage, above other Men, that we are under the Government of 'em.

And First, consider the whole Body of the *Pagan Superstition*, and what else did it tend to, but to debase Mankind infinitely below

*The Pagan Superstition*

tended to no- the Dignity of their Nature, and to Defile 'em much more than the  
thing, but to very Brutes. The Gods, which the Pagans worship, were at best  
defile humane the most Vile and Infamous of Humane Race, viz. An Adulterous  
Nature. Jupiter, a Revengeful Juno, a Drunken Bacchus, a Wanton Venus,

The Gods  
the Pagans  
worshiped,  
were, at best,  
the most in-  
famous Men  
and Women.

a Thievish Mercury, and a Cruel Mars (not to mention how they Bowed themselves before, and gave Divine Worship to the most poor and contemptible, senseless Creatures.) And when they Worship'd Adulterers, and Whores, and Thieves, and Drunkards, what can be expected but that the Rites whereby they serv'd 'em, should be accompany'd with the vilest Practices, such as were answerable to the Nature and Temper of such Deities? Which was the occasion of those Words of St. Peter, 1 Epist. 4. 3. telling those, who had been lately Converted from Paganism to Christianity, that *The time past of their lives was sufficient to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when they walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, Excess of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings, and abominable Idolatries; wherein is more than intimated, that the Idolatries of the Heathens were usually accompany'd with such villanous Practices. And indeed from the Pagan Authors themselves we know they were so.*

Many times  
they worship-  
ed the very  
Devils them-  
selves.

But it was not only the vilest of Men and Women, but the Devils themselves, whom the Pagans worship'd, and whom they were wont to serve, not only with abominable Idolatries, accompany'd with most lewd Practices (which however hateful to right Reason, might be grateful to some sensual Spirits) but they were forc'd to commit many times the greatest Violences possible to Humane Nature in their Worship to those barbarous and cruel Devils, they Ador'd. Thus it was the manner of the *Worshippers of Baal to cut themselves with Knives and Lancers till the Blood gush'd out upon them, 1 King. 18. 28. Nay, They sacrificed their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils, and shed innocent Blood, even the blood of their Sons and of their Daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the Idols of Canaan, Psal. 106. 37, 38. Which was a Barbarity so horrid to Humane Nature, that they were forc'd to make use of loud Instruments, at the time of Sacrifice, to drown the Noise of the shrieking Infants. And at this Day the Idol Visiputsi amongst the Indians, is said to have many Thousands slain in one of his solemn Processions, it being usual for his Worshipers to throw themselves under the Wheels of his Massy Charriot, on purpose to be crush'd in Pieces, by the Weight thereof going over 'em. Such are the lewd and barbarous Rites of the Pagan Religion, not to mention any thing of those intolerable slavish Fears, which always possess Idolatrous and Superstitious Religionists, who are always in dread, lest they should Incense the angry and peevish Demon, by every little Accident, and are ever upon the Rack, studying to please him by innumerable little insignificant Observances.*

And that  
with lewd,  
barbarous,  
and cruel  
Rites.

The Maho-  
metan Reli-  
gion is a vile  
Imposture.

Nor Secondly, As to the *Mahometan Religion*, is there any thing in it worthy of God, whereby we should judge him to be its Author. First, it is a plain Imposture and Cheat, pretending to be Reveal'd by God, to his Prophet *Mahomet*, after the Jewish and Christian Religion, as a more perfect Institution than either, whereas, indeed, look into the whole Matter, and inward Frame thereof, and we shall find nothing in it, as One observes, but a "Mass of foolish  
"Opinions



"Opinions, odd Stories, uncouth Ceremonies, compounded chiefly of the Dregs of Christian Heresies, together with some Ingredients of Judaism and Paganism, confusedly jumbled, or unskilfully mixt one with the other. But as to that great Principle of it, which promises in Paradise a Thousand Years satisfaction, arising from sensual Pleasures, and the Enjoyment of Women, to those, who shall slay the Unbelievers, that is, Christians; (for so they do call us especially, because we believe not in their *Mahomet*.) This one Principle of their Religion, I say, is enough to debauch Humane Nature to the lowest Degree of Naughtiness, by giving Encouragement to the Two worst of Sins, Lust, and Cruelty; and accordingly the Effects of it are, That they give an unbounded Range to their Lusts amongst themselves, and are Cruel and Blood-thirsty to all the World besides, being Instigated by their very Religion, to fill the whole Earth with War, Desolations and Misery; so that this is another Religion also, which Tends, instead of Improving, to deprave Humane Nature, and to make it much worse.

*Its Principles tend to Lust, and Cruelty.*

And Thirdly, As to the Jewish Religion, tho' that indeed was of a Divine Original, yet whether it were that the Infancy of the World was not ripe for a more deep and manly Instruction; or whether that particular Nation however, to whose Disposition and Capacity those Laws and Constitutions were suited, was unfit for the highest and hardest Lessons; so it was, that St. Paul calls their Ordinances, *Poor and Beggarly Elements*, Gal. 4. 9. 3. And indeed as to the Ritual Part of their Law, the Ceremonies and Sacrifices thereof, were for the most part Types and Shadows of good things to come, Heb. 10. 1. And as to the Moral Part, Moses for the hardness of their Hearts, was forc'd to Indulge 'em, what the Perfection and Purity of the Christian Religion, will by no means allow of, as may be seen in the Case of *Putting away a Wife for every Cause*, Luke 16. 8. But above all, it is to be consider'd, that universal Love and Charity to Enemies, to all Mankind, of what Nation and Religion soever they be, which does so nearly resemble us to God himself, *Who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil, and on the Good*, Matt. 5. 45. was as it were a *New Commandment to them*, Joh. 13. 34. And yet such an unbounded Charity and Kindness, as this, is the great and necessary Duty of Christianity. So that Judaism at the best, and before that it was Corrupted by the false Interpretations put upon the Law, by the Scribes and Pharisees, was but an imperfect Draught of Religion, begun by Moses, but left to be finished by the more perfect Strokes of our Saviour's Pencil afterwards, who is therefore said to have *Come, not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fill 'em up*, Matth. 5. 17. Thus Imperfect at best, was the Jewish Law. But now consider

Fourthly, The whole Body of that Religion, which Christ our supreme Head and Governour has given us, and under whose Guidance we have the Happiness to be, as we are the *Members of Christ's Church*, and nothing can represent God in more Noble Characters, and Glorious Perfections; nothing can give a more Honourable and Rational Account of his Proceedings with Man, both in his Creation and Redemption of him, than it does. And as his Laws are infinitely beyond what the Wisdom of any Humane Law-givers

*Christianity a most excellent Religion.*

did ever yet contrive for the good Order of Man in this World, and his real Happiness both in this, and the World to come; so no Motives, nor Reasons can possibly be more Powerful, than those, which Christianity does give us, to Obey those Laws.

*It gives a  
most excellent  
Representati-  
on of God.*

As to the Nature of God, Christianity does plainly Represent him as a Being, that has no manner of Imperfection in his Nature, but as One, that is Adorn'd with all the most Glorious Attributes and highest Perfections possible. It represents him to us so infinitely Wise, Just and Holy, and yet so wonderfully beyond all Comparison Good and Merciful; and to add to all this, so intimately Present to all we say, or do, so Omniscient in discerning the very Thoughts and Intents of our Hearts, and withal so absolutely Powerful in doing whatsoever he pleases in Heaven and in Earth, that

*Shall not this his Excellency make us afraid? Job 13. 11.*

*It gives an  
Honourable  
account of his  
Proceedings  
with Man-  
kind, with re-  
ference both  
to his Crea-  
tion and Re-  
demption of  
us.*

And then as to his Proceedings with Man, both in his Creation and Redemption of him. Christianity gives us the most Plain and rational Account thereof in the World. It gives us to know how that God made Man Upright, and being so, we were at perfect Agreement with him; but that afterwards we fell by Transgression from him, and must have suffer'd the Doom of Rebels for so doing. It lets us then know, That God taking Pity of us in this miserable Case, sent his own Son to Preach Repentance, and to offer Terms of Reconciliation to us. And moreover, because it was not consistent with God's Holiness, nor with his Wisdom, and Justice, as Governour of the World, to let Sin go unpunish'd, or to accept of a Sacrifice and Satisfaction less infinite in *Value*, than he was in *Majesty*, who was Offended, that he therefore gave this his only Begotten Son also to Dye for us, and accepted of his infinitely Meritorious Sufferings here, instead of our suffering Eternally hereafter; and as a sufficient Satisfaction to his injur'd Justice, which we in our own Persons could not pay, without perishing Everlastingly. Christianity does withal Reveal to us, that this our High-Priest, after having Offer'd himself for us here on Earth, a Sacrifice for our Sins, he is now gone into Heaven, to Intercede with the Father, in the Merit thereof, that it may be accepted to the Pardon of 'em. And it also Informs us, that being Ascended to his Father, which is in Heaven, in order fully to Reconcile him to Man, he has substituted his Holy Spirit here on Earth, to perfect the Reconciliation and Conformity of our Natures to God, by moving and moulding our Hearts to true Repentance, and Faith in him.

This is in short, that account which Christianity gives us, both of our Creation and of our Redemption. And so every way Rational it is in it self, and so exceedingly agreeable to the wisest Methods of Government in the World, that tho' it was beyond the reach of our Reasons, before this whole Mystery of Redemption was Reveal'd to us in the Gospel, to think of such an extraordinary way for our Recovery out of a lost and undone Condition, and of Reconciliation to God; yet now since it is Revealed, all the reason of Mankind, whose *Understandings the God of this world hath not blinded*, must own, that there is no method of Proceeding in such a Case, could be more worthy of the Holiness, Justice, Mercy and Wisdom of God, nor so likely to work Repentance in Man; nor conse-

consequently more agreeable to the wise Governour of the World to take, than this. So agreeable to the best improved Reason of Mankind, are the Doctrinal, and even the most mysterious Parts of the Christian Religion, that Religion, which it is our Happiness, as we are Members of Christ's Church, to be under the Direction of.

Nor can any thing be better contrived for the Happiness of Men, with relation to themselves, or others, than what the Laws of our Saviour do directly tend to. As to our selves, they do so powerfully tend to mortify our Lusts and Appetites, those Rebels to our own Reason, to moderate our Passions and Affections, which so violently rack and disturb our own Breasts; and they are excellently fitted also, to make us so Humble and Self-denying, so Temperate and Sober, so Chast and Pure, as Men on Earth would appear to be Angels come from Heaven, were the Laws of Christ universally followed. And lastly as to Others, such Justice and Uprightness, such Charity and Kindness, such Quiet and Peaceableness, does Christianity incline Men to, (upon which account the State of the Gospel is represented, as that, *In which nothing should destroy, nor hurt in the holy Mountain*, Isa. 11. 9.) And let me also add, such Prudent and Fatherly Care of Chikdren, Servants and Dependants, do the Laws of Christ prescribe, as would make a Heaven here upon Earth, were they universally Obey'd. I say, were they universally Obey'd.

And yet to add to all this Excellency of Christ's Government and Laws, over us already seen, so Powerful is our Obedience to all these Laws Enforc'd by those mighty Principles and Motives of Christianity, viz. The Articles of our Christian Faith, I mean, so very Perswasive and Forcible are the Motives, which Christ does give us to the Practise of these Vertues, beyond what was in any Reasons and Motives, which the *Philosophers*, or even *Moses* did give, the Gentiles, or the Jews, to be in any degree Vertuous, that this is another addition to our Advantage, in having Christ for our *Supreme Head* and Law-giver, and in being *Members of Christ's Church*. In a word, so Honourable to God, so Perfective of our own Natures, and so Beneficial to mankind are the Laws of Christ, and so well is our Obedience secur'd to 'em, by those Principles he has taught us, that this very Thing does speak our exceeding Great Privilege, in being Members of Christ, and under his Conduct and Government, as our supreme Head and Law-giver.

But especially this Advantage will appear to be very Great, if we consider, *How that together with those most excellent Laws, that he has given us, he has also appointed us most Edifying and comfortable Ordinances, to conduct us to Heaven.*

Now by Divine *Institutions* and *Ordinances*, I do mean those positive Appointments and Observations, which he has given his Church, and all the Members thereof, for their Improvement in the Knowledge and Practise of his Holy Religion and Laws. And that which our Great Law-giver has done of this Nature, is this; He has Ordain'd solemn and set Days, viz. The Christian Sabbaths, for his own Service; He has Order'd that publick Assemblies of all Christians should be held upon those Days; He has Authoriz'd and Commanded the Publication and Preaching of his Laws at those publick Assemblies; He has appointed that Common



Prayers, Supplications and Thanksgivings, for Divine Grace and Assistance, to Enable us to perform these Laws then Preacht, and for other Mercies, should be jointly put up to him by all Christians on those solemn Days, and publick Assemblies; And lastly, he has Enjoin'd therein the use of Sacraments, as means of Conveying such Grace and Assistance, and also as Oaths and Obligations upon us to be Obedient to those Laws. All which are the Priviledges that do belong to the Members of Christ's *Visible Church*. And if we compare 'em with what others want of this Nature, they are indeed most singular Favours, vouchsafed only to such as are Members thereof, and which *Aliens and Strangers* have no Right, nor Admittance to. And consider'd in themselves, they are most admirable Advantages towards the Observation of God's most Holy Laws, and in order to a Holy and Good Life.

I. First, I say, *All these foremention'd Priviledges do belong to the Members of Christ's Church*, to such as have been Baptized, and profess themselves to be Christians. To understand which Rights and Priviledges the better, you must know, that as there are "Two sorts of Members in the visible Church, so there are Two kinds of Priviledges that belong to each sort, as One rightly states this Matter, each having those Priviledges, which are proper and peculiar to 'em, according to the relation they bear to the Head, and their Fellow-members.

Publick Ordinances, the Priviledge of every Member of Christ's Church.

First, "There are Members only by *Fæderal* or *Covenant Holiness*, such are only Born of Water, when by Baptism they are United to Christ and the Church, and took upon them the Profession and Practice of the Christian Religion. Now the Priviledges that do belong to these, are of the same make with their Church-Membership, Outward, and consisting only in outward and publick Communion with the Church, in Word and Ordinances.

Secondly, "There are Members by *Real and Inherent Holiness*, such as are, not only Born of Water, but of the Spirit also, when by the inward Operation of the Holy Ghost their Souls are Renew'd after the Image of God, and made Partakers of a Divine Nature. And the Priviledges that do belong to these, are not only the foremention'd Ones, but together with them, others that are suitable to their more spiritual Relations, Inward, and such as consist in the special and particular Care and Protection of God, and in the more plentiful Measures of his Grace, and in the more sensible Comforts of his Holy Spirit, according to that of our Saviour, *Mat. 25. 29. Unto every One that hath*, or Improveth those Talents of Grace he has received, *shall be given, and he shall have abundance*. So that these latter, and more peculiar Priviledges indeed, do not belong to every Member of the visible Church, but to those only, who are sincere in their Profession of Christianity, and who, by their more than ordinary Piety, are become Dear to God.

But then, as to *Outward Priviledges*, it is not only the Duty, but it is the Priviledge, which of Right belongs to Every Member of Christ's Church, to Observe the Lord's Day, to be Present in the Publick Assemblies, to Join in the Common Prayers, and even to Partake, when of Age, of the Lord's Supper. So we find, *Acts 2. 41, 42. That the whole Three Thousand Souls, who received the Word,*  
and

and were Baptized, continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtle's Doctrin and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.

True it is, ſuch is that more than ordinary Regard, that the Church of Chriſt has for the Lord's Supper, that moſt ſolemn Ordinance in the Chriſtian Religion, that when any Member becomes Scandalous for any Sin, he is to be *Suspended from Communion in that, till from the he amends*: So it is order'd in the Rubrick, before the Communion Service, that if any be an open and notorious Evil-Liver, ſo that the Congregation be thereby Offended; The Curate, having Knowledge thereof, ſhall Call him, and Advertiſe him, that in any wiſe he preſume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himſelf to have truly Repented, and Amended his former Naughty Life, that the Congregation may thereby be ſatisfy'd, which before were Offended. And the ſame Order ſhall the Curate uſe with thoſe, betwixt whom he perceiveth Malice and Hatred to reign, nor ſuffering them to be Partakers at the Lord's Table, till he Knows them to be Reconciled. But otherwiſe, till a Member become Notorious and Scandalous for his Evil Principles, or Practices, he may claim the *Right* to be Admitted to the Lord's Supper; for even Judas himſelf, before he Betray'd our Saviour, did Partake with him at the firſt Inſtitution of the Supper, as you will find, *Matth. 26. 25, 26.* So that as to the Outward Inſtitutions and Ordinances of Chriſt, they are Priviledges, you ſee, that do belong to all the Members of Chriſt's Church, to all ſuch as have been Baptized, and Profeſs themſelves to be Chriſtians. And now

Secondly, *If we compare but theſe Outward Priviledges of God's Holy Ordinances, with what others do want of this Nature, they are indeed moſt ſingular Favours, vouchſafed only to ſuch as are Members of Chriſt's Church, and which Aliens and Strangers have no Right, nor Admittance to.* For alas! The Infidel part of the World, whether Jews, Turks, or Pagans, have none of theſe Divine Ordinances amongſt 'em. They neither Know the Lord's Day, nor Hold any Aſſemblies thereon for the Inſtruction in his Laws; neither do they Profeſs Belief in, nor Pray to the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and they are utter Strangers to our Holy Myſteries. And hence it comes to paſs, that thoſe miſerable People continue ſtill in Blindneſs, Ignorance and Barbarity; remain perfect Slaves to Satan, and their own Brutish Luſts, and for the moſt part of 'em, are degenerated into ſuch Inhumanity, Cruelty, and Brutality, that Tygers, Wolves, and Vipers, the moſt Devouring and Venemous Creatures in the World, are not ſo miſcheivous to Mankind, as that Part thereof, who either know not, or contemn God's Holy Ordinances, are one to another: So true it is, what Solomon has Obſerv'd, *Prov. 29. 18.* that *Where there is no Viſion, or no Word and Ordinances of Divine Revelation, the People periſh.* Which brings me

Laſtly, To conſider *What excellent Priviledges they are in themſelves,* And that they are upon Two accounts. Firſt, As being moſt admirable Advantages towards the Obſervation of God's moſt Holy Laws. Secondly, As being exceedingly comfortable to thoſe, who Enjoy 'em.

*Scandalous Members to be ſuspended from the Lord's Supper.*

*I. Chriſtian Ordinances are a ſingular Favour, which Aliens and Unbelievers do not, nor have any Right to enjoy.*

*II. They are excellent Advantages conſider'd in themſelves.*

Q

And

I. And First, Divine Ordinances are most Excellent Priviledges, as *As conducing being most admirable Advantages towards the Observation of God's much towards most Holy Laws, and in order to a Holy and Good Life.* For why? In these Holy Ordinances we have all the Means both Outward, and Inward, afforded for our Conversion. As to the Outward, you have the very Scriptures themselves, the Body of those Holy Laws, publickly Proclaim'd and Read out to you; the Scripture it self, I say, *Which was given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,* 2 Tim. 3. 16. 17. In these Holy Ordinances again, you are not left to the Deceits and Whispers of a private Spirit, but you have the Doctrine of the Church, collected into a *Form of sound Words*, and containing all that is necessary, whether as to *Faith*, or that *Love which is in Christ Jesus*, or which is required in the Christian Religion, 2 Tim. 1. 13. You have this Collected, I say, partly by the Apostle's themselves, and partly by others, the wisest and best Divines out of the Holy Scriptures, and propos'd to you as a Rule to walk by: And moreover you have the Ministers of Christ constantly Applying both to your direction: The Ministers of Christ, I say, who as his *Ambassadors do Pray you in Christ's stead to be Reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Again, In these Holy Ordinances, you do not wrestle with God for his Mercies, in the strength only of your own private Prayers, but you have your Devotions mingled with the concurrent Prayers of all God's People, and so by your joint Forces, after an humble, but powerful manner, do Besiege Heaven; for the *joint and united Prayers* of Christians have, above all others, the Promise of a Gracious Answer, *Matth. 18. 20.* Our Saviour assuring us there, that *Where Two or Three are gather'd together in his Name, there he will be in the midst of them.* And lastly, You receive herein, from the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, that Food, which is necessary to the Nourishment of the Soul, as Meat is to the Strength of the Body, the same Blessed Saviour of the World assuring us, as you will see, *John 6. 55.* and the 63. compar'd together, that *His Flesh is Meat indeed, and that his Blood is Drink indeed.* And then as to the Inward Means of performing God's Laws, *viz.* The Grace and Assistance of his Holy Spirit, this, as it is absolutely necessary to enable our Weakness in this our fallen State; so it is no otherwise to be expected than in the Use and Ministry of Divine Ordinances, as shall be presently seen.

In a word, The outward Ordinances, and Institutions of the Gospel, together with the Holy Spirit accompanying them, are the only ordinary Means of *Conversion*. Some may pretend to be *above Ordinances*, but Experience tells us, that accordingly as Men do slight and neglect 'em, accordingly do they decay in Grace and Virtue; and when once they begin wholly to lay them aside, they become perfectly Graceless, and are given up to a Reprobate Mind, as is daily seen in such as make nothing of Profaning the Lord's Day, and do totally lay aside Prayers and Sacraments.

Secondly, And they are not more Profitable and Edifying, *than As most comfortable to they are Comfortable to the Spirits of all Pious Souls, who Enjoy 'em.* the Souls of Holy David was a most eminent Instance of this. *My Soul thirsteth for*



for God, for the Living God, when shall I come and appear before God, *those, who ex-*  
 Psal. 42. 2. See what earnest Longings he had for the publick Ser- *joy them.*  
 vice. And I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of  
 the Lord, Psal. 122. 1. And Psal. 65. 4. he exprelles his sence of  
 this Matter, thus, Blessed is the man, whom thou choofest, and causest to  
 approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; he shall be sasisfy'd  
 in the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy Temple.

Alas! the inestimable Priviledges and Advantages of Divine Or- *They are sel-*  
 dinances, as the Benefit of the Heat and Light, and all other com- *dom suffici-*  
 mon Mercies, are never sufficiently valued, till most wanted. In the *ently valued,*  
 abundance of 'em, we slight 'em, but when depriv'd of 'em, we see, *till most*  
 we cannot live the spiritual Life without 'em. This is most signifi- *wanted.*  
 cantly Express'd, Amos 8. 11, 12. Behold, the days come, saith the  
 Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread,  
 nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they  
 shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they  
 shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.  
 You see here, that the Famine of Bread is nothing, in comparifon  
 with the Famine of the Word and Ordinances. I will send a famine  
 in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing  
 the words of the Lord; which is a much forer Famine, for it is a Fa-  
 mine, which will starve the Soul. And when they are deprived of  
 the Word and Ordinances, then shall they wander from Sea to Sea, and  
 from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the  
 word of the Lord, and shall not find it. And accordingly, we may  
 always observe this Difference in Men's Esteem of those excellent  
 Advantages. In the outward Peace and Prosperity of the Church,  
 when the Church Doors are always open, and Prayers and Sacra-  
 ments constantly Administred, then how many, that live near the  
 House of God, shall seldom come at it; and how will others Pro-  
 fanely pass by it, even in time of Divine Service? And how do  
 People, when it is Plentiful, loath this Heavenly Manna? But when  
 Persecution at any time arises, and the Church Doors are shut up,  
 and Divine Ordinances are forbid, upon Pain of Death, how then  
 shall you see those very same Persons go many Miles, and with the  
 utmost hazard of their Lives, Assemble themselves together, and  
 take the greatest Comfort imaginable in Enjoying 'em? This  
 the Experience of all Ages does Confirm; And God grant our pre-  
 sent Neglect of his Holy Institutions and Ordinances, may not pro-  
 voke him to teach us also, how to Value and Esteem the Priviledges  
 and Advantages of 'em, by depriving us thereof. And thus I have  
 at length shew'd you, how that the First Great Priviledge, which  
 does peculiarly belong to all the Members of Christ's visible Church,  
 as they are the Members of such a Society, is a most Reasonable and  
 Excellent Body of Religion and Laws, together with most Profitable  
 and Edifying Institutions and Ordinances, given and appointed  
 us by Him, our supreme Head and Governour, to Conduct us to  
 to Heaven. And now it is time to proceed, and to shew you,  
 how that

Secondly, We enjoy thereby a great Measure of Divine Grace and *The Second*  
 Assistance, derived down from him our Head; and Convey'd by those *general Pri-*  
 his Ordinances, to Enable us to Conform to his Religion, and to *viledge be-*

*longing to the Members of Christ's Church, is a sufficient measure of divine Grace and Assistance, derived from him, the Head, and Convey'd by his Ordinances, to Enable us to Conform our selves to his Religion, and to Obey his Laws.*

Obey his Laws. The mystical Body of Christ is often compar'd in Scripture, to the natural Body of Man, and that as for many others, so for this very good Reason, that as in the natural Body, every Part partakes of Life, and Sense, and Motion, from the Head, so do we, by being Baptized Members of Christ, of Grace and Help from him our Head, *From whom all the Body, by Joints and Bands, having Nourishment ministred, Increaseth with the Increase of God, Col. 2. 19.*

*By the same means that Christ is United to his Members, is Grace Conveyed down from him, as Head, to those Members.*

Now it is easy to conceive, how Christ, as a *Political Head*, should give Laws to his Spiritual Kingdom, the Church, and how, as such, he should Head and Protect it, and every Member thereof, against its Enemies. But the difficulty with some, is to conceive, how, as from a *Mystical Head*, Divine Grace and Assistance should be Convey'd down from him, to us his Members. But it is but to consider what those *Joints and Bands* are, which Unite us to Christ, as our Head, and we may then easily conceive, how we shall have *Nourishment ministred unto us, till we Increase with the Increase of God.* For, whatever are the means of Uniting us to him, the same are the means also of Conveying the Influences of his Holy Spirit down upon us.

*The first Medium of Union betwixt Christ, and his Members, must be each Member's Union to the Catholick Church.*

And the First great means of Uniting each Member to Christ, must be its Union to the *Catholick Church*, the Body of Christ, not Cutting himself off from it, either by Renouncing his Covenant with God, or by causlessly separating from the Communion of that Sound, and Orthodox Part of the Church, whereof he is an immediate Member; and by not giving just Occasion to the Officers of Christ's spiritual Kingdom, the Church, to Excommunicate, or Cut him off for so doing. For it is Just with the *Mystical Body*, the Church, as it is with the natural Body of Man. If a Leg or an Arm should be Cut off from the Body, by a Man's own Hand, or by the King's Officers, it cannot receive Nourishment from the Head, and for lack thereof must soon Die. And so in the Church of Christ, a *Heretick*, that for denying the Faith and Sacraments; and a *Schismatick*, who for breaking the Communion, shall be Cut off from the Church, cannot ordinarily expect to receive Supplies of Grace from Christ, the mystical Head, which by *Keeping the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of Peace*, he might. But it is not sufficient, in order to its deriving Life from the Head, that a Member be United to the Body only, and to any of its Parts, but it is moreover particularly necessary, that it should be United also to those principal Parts of the Body, where the Blood and Spirits are form'd, and from whence they are Convey'd to every single Member. And therefore

II.  
*Its Union to the Lawful Governours and Teachers of the Church.*

A Second means of Uniting each Member to Christ the Head, and so of Conveying spiritual Supplies of Grace down from him to such a Member, is its Unity to those Lawful Governours and Teachers, which Christ has Appointed in the Church, by Joining with 'em in the same Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity, and by holding Communion with 'em, in the same Holy Worship of God. The Lawful Governours and Teachers in the Church of Christ,  
are

are the principal Parts in the *Mystical Body*, as the Heart, the Liver, and the Brain, are in the *Natural*. For as in the *Natural*, from these principal Parts are sent forth that Portion of Blood and Spirits, which give Life and Strength to every single Member; so from Christ's Ministers, is Communicated to all the Members of the *Mystical Body*, that Nourishment, which maintains the spiritual Life in them. All this may be fairly gather'd from *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.* *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the Faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* In which Words, the Ministers of Christ's Church, whether Extraordinary, as Apostles and Evangelists, or Ordinary, as Pastors and Teachers, are said to be *αὐτοὶ τὸ κατασκευάζοντες*, for the Holding and Knitting together the Church, and that from them each Member does immediately receive that Nourishment of sound Doctrine, whereby he grows up to be a Perfect Man in the Knowledge, and Practice of true Religion. And indeed, the Graces of the Holy Spirit are Convey'd by those Ordinances, which they only have power to Administer, which brings me

Lastly, To shew how, that next to the being United to the Church, and its principal Parts, the Ministers of Christ therein, the great Bonds of Union to the Head, and means of Conveying his Grace to the Members, are the Sacraments, and other Holy Offices and Ordinances appointed for that Purpose; and of which the Ministers of Religion, are the only Dispensers. For just again, as in the *Body Natural*, there are Nerves that Branch from the Head through the Body, conveying the Animal Spirits to every Member thereof; so in the *Mystical Body*, the Church, there are the Ordinances, of *Sacraments, Preaching, Publick and Common Prayers, and such like Holy Offices*, Administred by Persons set apart for that Purpose, to be the Conveyances of those ordinary Supplies of his *Holy Spirit*, which he thinks necessary to preserve that Member in Health and Vigour. So that thus at length you see, how that in keeping in Union with the mystical Body of Christ, his Church, and with its Lawful Governours and Teachers, and in the use of Sacraments, and other Divine Ordinances, those Conduits and Conveyances of his Holy Spirit to us, we shall have spiritual Life, and Strength, and Vigour, derived down to us from Christ, our spiritual Head, in like manner, as in the natural Body of Man, the Animal Life, and Strength, and Vigour, is derived down to all the parts of the Body, from the natural Head.

And this is a most singular Priviledge, if compar'd with that little, or nothing of this Nature, which others, who are not Members of Christ's Church do enjoy; and also it will appear to be a most exceeding great Advantage, if consider'd in it self.

And First, *If we compare our Happiness with Others*, we shall find it the peculiar Advantage of Christianity, which no other Law, nor Doctrine so much as pretends to, that it not only clearly teacheth us, and strongly perswadeth us to so excellent a Way of Life, but provideth also Divine Help and Assistance to Enable us to Practice it.

III.  
*The use of  
Christ's Insti-  
tutions and  
Ordinances.*

I.  
*Divine  
Grace a most  
singular Pri-  
viledge, if  
compared*

R

If



with what others enjoy of this Nature. If God would have Ordinarily, and in the way of a *Constant Dispensation*, imparted so excellent a Gift to any, to be sure it would have been to the Jewish Church; but we are told *Job. 1. 17. That the Law was given by Moses, but that Grace came by Jesus Christ*, that is, the Graces and Gifts of his Holy Spirit, as well as other Mercies and Favours; so that tho' *Moses* deliver'd Legal Precepts, it is by Jesus Christ we shall have the Assistance, whereby we shall be Enabled to attain unto Holiness. And as to that Measure of Grace, afforded to Holy Men under the Law, whatsoever it were, it was through him, the Promised *Messiah*, and in Vertue of that *Covenant of Grace, Confirmed with Abraham before the Law*; but the more constant Influences of the Holy Spirit, and the fuller Measures thereof are derived from him, down upon us now under the Gospel. And because of that more plentiful Measure of Grace and Spirit Communicated unto us from Christ under the Gospel, does the Apostle call the Gospel, the *Ministration of the Spirit*, in Opposition to the Law, which he styles the *Ministration of Death*, 2 Cor. 3. 8, 9. And does therefore so assuredly promise himself Success in his Ministry, ver. 5, 6. *Such trust have we in Christ to Godward, not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing, as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament, or Covenant, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit*; where the Gospel is styl'd the Spirit, as for other Reasons, so for this, in the Judgment of the Learned Dr. *Hammond*, that Grace which is the Gift of the Spirit, is now join'd to the Gospel, which was not to the Law. In a word, and to speak in the Words of a Learned Author, "Other Laws for want of this, are in effect Ministeries of "Condemnation; Racks of Conscience; Parents of Guilt, and of Regret; Reading hard Lessons, but not Assisting to do after them; "Imposing heavy Burthens, but not Enabling to bear them. But "our Law of the Gospel is not such, it is not a dead Letter, but hath "a quickning Spirit accompanying it; it not only foundeth through "the Ear, but stampeth it self upon the Heart of him, that sincerely doth Embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure Guide "to all Good, and a safe Guard from all Evil.

## II.

And this Advantage, as it is proper to our Religion, So it is exceeding considerable in it self. The Advantage is, that every Member in Christ's Body, in what Station soever he be, shall have sufficient Supplies of Grace derived down from Christ, our Head, proportionable to his Necessities, by those means of Conveying it, which Christ has appointed for that Purpose. I say, every Member in Christ's Body,

*All the Members of Christ have Supplies proportionable to their Station in the Church.*

in what Station soever he be: For *As we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office, so we being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another*, Rom. 12. 4, 5. that is, there are different Members in the Church of Christ, some are to be Governours and Teachers of Others, and accordingly must be Endow'd with a Spirit of Government, and Gift of Teaching; and others are of a more private Capacity in the Church of Christ, whatever they may in other Respects, and their Business is to keep a Conscience void of Offence, both towards God and Man, and faithfully to discharge their Duties to God, their Neighbour, and Themselves. And whatever, I say, those several Duties are, which arise

arise from their several Stations in the Church, they shall have a competent measure of Divine Grace, Enabling them to discharge 'em. They shall not have Gifts, that are necessary to the Discharge of other's Offices, but not of their own; that is, a private Christian call'd to no Office in the Church, is not to expect, nor ought to pretend to have received Gifts of Government, and Teaching in a publick Ministerial way, *For God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace in all the Churches of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. But every Member of the mystical Body, by keeping himself United to the Head, in such ways, as has been shew'd, shall have such Graces and Assistances derived down to him from Christ, who is that Head, as are necessary and proper for him.

And, that too, in such Measures and Proportions, as, according to the different Times and Occasions in the Church, are wanting. Thus in the first Plantation of the Gospel, when the Work was so Extraordinary, that there was need of Miracles to convince the Jews of the Insufficiency of Moses's Law, and the Gentiles of the Falseness of the Pagan Superstition, then did Christ bestow upon his Apostles divers Extraordinary Gifts, viz. Of Miracles, Prophecy, *And also in such Measures as according to different Times and Occasions in the Church, are wanting.* discerning of Spirits, divers kind of Tongues, and the Interpretation of Tongues, 1 Cor. 12. 10. And as to all Christians in general, as the Malice of Satan did then most violently rage against the Church, Persecuting to the Death those, who would not Renounce Christ, and his Religion; so all the Christians in those Times were very extraordinarily Strengthen'd, no doubt, to Resist such strong Temptations. But now, that the Church is Establish'd, and the Truth of Christianity already Prov'd and Believ'd, God does assist the Ministers of Religion only, with the ordinary Graces of his Spirit in the discharge of their Ministry. And as to Lay Christians therefore, except it be when the Orthodox are call'd out in any Part of the World (as sometimes they are to this Day) to suffer for the Truth, they receive no other than ordinary Assistances. But this both Ministers and People are sure to do, in the use of those Means, that Christ has Appointed in his Church for that Purpose; so very considerable, on many accounts, are the Priviledges, that do belong to the Members of Christ's Church.

## THE Seventh Lecture.

*Wherein I was made a Child of God.*

**T**HE Preliminary Questions and Answers of your Church Catechism, as I have already told you, do give you a general Account of the whole Covenant of Grace. And these Words, *Wherein I was made a Member of Christ*, being the First of those invaluable Priviledges, made over to us in this Covenant, on God's Part, I have already explain'd, and open'd to you what they do Import.

The next of those Priviledges, made over to us in the Covenant of Grace, is exprest in these Words, *Wherein I was made a Child of God*, in order to make you sensible of the Vastness of which Priviledge also,

First, I will shew you what is meant in Scripture, and here in your Catechism, by a *Child of God*.

Secondly, What an inestimable Priviledge accordingly it is, to be a *Child of God*.

*What is meant in the Catechism by a Child of God.*

And first let us Enquire, What is meant both in Scripture, and here in your Catechism, by a *Child of God*. To understand which, we must Enquire into the several meanings of this Phrase, in the Holy Scriptures, and then, in which of those Sences it is to be understood, here in your Catechism, when every Catechumen is taught to Answer, that *In his Baptism he was made a Child of God*. And as to the several Acceptations of this Phrase, in the Holy Scriptures.

*I. Not the Son of God by an Eternal Generation.*

First, In the highest, most natural, and most proper meaning of the Word, there is He, who is the Son, or Child of God, by an *Eternal Generation*, viz. Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who being Begotten of God the Father, from all Eternity, in a peculiar, inconceivable, and inexpressible manner, so as to be Co-equal, Co-eternal with the Father himself, is call'd the *Only Begotten Son of God*, Joh. 3. 16. But then, being he is in so peculiar and high a manner, the Son of God, as infinitely to exceed, that wherein any one else, whether Angels or Men, can be call'd his Sons, he cannot, in any measure, be meant here by a *Child of God*, which signifies a Priviledge common to many, as will be presently shew'd.

*Not every Son by Temporal Creation, which is a Sense too wide.*

Secondly, There are those, who are the Sons of God by a *Temporal Creation*, and such are Reasonable Creatures, both Angels and Men; both being call'd the *Sons of God*, as you will see, Job 1. 6. and Luk. 3. 38. And that, both upon the account of the manner of their



their Production, which was by the immediate Power of God, and because of their Spiritual and Immortal Natures, in which both do so immediately resemble God. But this is an Acceptation too wide. That which is meant here by a *Child of God*, is a Privilege, which all Men in the World do not enjoy, but is the Favour, which is granted to a selected Body of Men, who are separated from the rest of the World; Behold, *what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 1.

Thirdly, There are those, who are the Children of God by *Spiritual Regeneration*, by being renew'd in the Spirit of their Minds, and by being Created anew in *Righteousness and true Holiness*. And these are such, *Who have put off, concerning the former Conversation, the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and who have put on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. They are such, who are Born, not only of Water, but also of the Spirit, that is, who have not only been Baptized into the Christian Church, but have been Sanctify'd by the Holy Spirit, and have their whole Natures and Dispositions so altered for the Better, that, from Vicious and Ungodly, they are chang'd to Vertuous and Holy Dispositions and Inclinations.

III.

*Nor such only who are Children of God, by Spiritual Regeneration, which is a Sense too narrow.*

And such a vast Change wrought in our Natures by the Word and Spirit of God, may very justly give those, who Enjoy it, the Title of the *Children of God*; for it in the way of *Natural Generation*, the Communicating of a Principle of Life, and of suitable Operations, does found the Relation and Title of a *Father*, there is as good Reason why in *Regeneration*, the deriving such Holy and Heavenly Dispositions and Powers from the Word, and the Spirit of God to the Soul, as give to a Man a Divine Nature, whereby he is a Partaker of the Life and Likeness of God himself, should Entitle God to be also a Father, and such, who are so Regenerated and Renew'd, his Children. And accordingly in the Holy Scripture we find, that such a derivation of Strength and Grace from the Word and Spirit of God, does Entitle those, who are Renew'd thereby, to be Children of God. St. Paul not only attributing to the Ministry of the Word, a Power of *Begetting in Christ*, 1 Cor. 4. 15: But withal expressly assuring us, that *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 14. So that he is undoubtedly a *Child of God*, whoever giving himself up to the Guidance of God's Word and Spirit, is thereby *Sanctify'd wholly in his own Spirit, Soul and Body*, 1 Thes. 5. 23. so as to subdue and mortify every Lust, and every naughty, inordinate and worldly Desire.

And indeed every truly Regenerate Child of God does do so; such a One does by the power of the Word, and in the use and strength of that Grace, that God does afford him, subdue and mortify every Lust, and every naughty, inordinate, and worldly Desire. So we are expressly told, 1 Joh. 3. 9. *Whoever is Born of God, doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God*; that is, a sanctify'd Child of God, does really hate Sin, the very Temper and Bent of his Soul is against it; and as to living in any gross and wilful Sin, he cannot without much Reluctancy force himself to it; his renew'd Nature is so much contrary thereto. Such, I say, is every *Regenerate Child of God*;

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Such indeed and such indeed in a peculiar manner, and in the highest and strictest sense of the Word, that it can be apply'd to a meer Man, is a Child of God.

But then all, who are the Children of God, either in the sense of Scripture, or of your Catechism, are not actually thus Regenerate. As to the sense of Scripture, it is plain, as will presently appear, that every One, who bears the Relation of a Child to God, is not

Dutiful to his Father, which is in Heaven, no more than all Children are to their Natural Parents. It is a monstrous Thing indeed, that any Child should be Undutiful to so good and gracious a Father; but it is too true, that too many are so: Hear, O Heaven, and give ear, O Earth, for I the Lord have spoken; I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me, Isa. 1. 2. And as to the meaning of a Child of God, here in your Catechism, it is also plain, that it is not only such as are Renew'd in the Spirit of their minds, and do imitate God, that are there to be understood; for every One, who is Catechized, is requir'd to Answer, that In his Baptism he was made a Child of God, whereas many Catechumens are not actually as yet Renew'd, and really Converted, and by their own Fault, many will never be; so that a Child of God, by spiritual Regeneration, and a God-like Imitation, expresses rather the Duty of every One, what he ought to be, than the Notion and Nature of a Priviledge, which many may Enjoy, who in the meantime are not over Dutiful. So that a Child of God by spiritual Regeneration, or a God-like Imitation, is a meaning of the Word, as much too narrow to be the sense of it, here in your Catechism, as a Child by Creation was too wide. To proceed then,

Fourthly, There are the Children of God, by Vertue of a Covenant Relation, and also by Adoption, who are neither all the Sons of God by Creation, nor yet on the other side, such onely as are Renew'd in the Spirit of their Minds, and do imitate God: But they are all those, who have been Baptiz'd into the Covenant of Grace, and have been Incorporated into Christ's Church, and who do profess the true Religion, and themselves the Servants of the True God. Thus before the Law, Gen. 6. 2. the whole House and Posterity of Seth are call'd the Sons of God, as on the contrary, the Posterity of Cain are call'd the Daughters of Men. They are there call'd the Sons of God, because that in the Family of Seth, the Worship of the True God was continued and establish'd, from which the Posterity of Cain had Revolted. And so likewise under the Law, the whole Body of the Children of Israel are call'd the Children of God, Deut. 14. 1. and that for this Reason, as it follows, ver. 2. because they were a

This was the Notion of a Child of God before the Law.

Under the Law.

Holy people unto the Lord, and the Lord had chosen them to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the Nations that were upon the Earth. They were a Holy people unto the Lord, not all of 'em by an inward and real Change in their Natures, but by a Federal Holiness, and by reason of their separation from the rest of the Idolatrous and wicked World, by a Holy Covenant. Alas! as to their inward Holiness, this very Body of Men, who were call'd the Children of God, are said Deut. 32. 5. to have Corrupted themselves, and to have not the spot of Children, but to be a very froward Generation, Children in whom is no Faith, ver. 20. But their outward Relation to God

con-

continued notwithstanding, and that whole Body of People being in Covenant with God, were styl'd thereupon his Children.

And under the Gospel likewise, all that are Members of the Church, and in Covenant with God, are styl'd his Children. Thus *Under the Gospel.* 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. you will find, that with Relation to all those, concerning whom God declar'd, *He would be their God, and that they should be his People,* which are the exprefs Terms of the Covenant betwixt God and all Christians, as you will see Heb. 8. 10. and with Relation to all those, whom he commanded to *Come out from among the Gentiles,* and to be separate, and *not to touch the unclean thing,* that is, not to Partake in their Idolatry, which is the very Description of the Members of Christ's Church; I say, with Relation to all these, he declar'd he would be *a Father unto 'em, and that they should be his Sons and Daughters.*

And such are called Sons by *Adoption*, concerning whom it is said, *Also a Child of God,* Gal. 4. 4, 5. *When the fulness of time was come, that God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to Redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* Now this word *Adoption*, is much used in the Epistles of St. Paul, to declare that filial Relation towards God, which the Members of Christ's Church are taken into; and because the right understanding of the Nature and meaning of such *Adoption*, will very much contribute to a right and through Explication of what is meant by a *Child of God*, I will

First, *Shew you the Nature and Meaning of Adoption, both amongst the Jews and Gentiles, amongst both which different People it was in use.*

Secondly, *I will then shew you, how we Christians, especially such of us, who are descended from the Gentiles, are accordingly Adopted to be the Children of God.*

And as to the First: *Adoption* (a Thing so well known both amongst Jews and Gentiles) *was the Taking in of a Stranger upon the want, or loss of natural Issue, into the Relation of a Child, and into the Rights and Privileges of a Son by Nature.* As to the use of it amongst the Israelites, we find Gen. 30. that Rachel upon the want of Issue by her Husband Jacob, did Adopt, and take as her own Sons, those of her Maid Bilhah, ver. 5. 8. And so likewise did Leah, when she saw that she had left Bearing, she Adopted, and took also, as her own Children, the Sons of Zilpah. And several other the like Instances may be found in Scripture, as in Jacob's Adopting Ephraim and Manasseh, the Sons of Joseph, to be his Sons, Gen. 48. 5. In all which cases it appears, that upon their Adoption, or being took into that Relation of Sons to Jacob, Rachel, and Leah, they were Instated into equal Privileges with the true and genuine Issue of those Persons, and were accounted amongst the Twelve Patriarchs of the Israelites, equally with the rest.

And as to the like Custom of *Adoption*, amongst the Gentiles, you'll see, Act. 7. 21. how that Moses, when he was cast out, Pharaoh's Daughter took him up, and nourished him as her own Son, that is Adopted him as such. And by that Right of Adoption he would have Inherited the Crown of Pharaoh, but that By Faith, when he was come to Years, he refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt.



*Egypt*, Heb. 11. 24. 26. Thus the *Egyptians* Adopted: And how the same Custom did also prevail amongst both *Greeks* and *Romans*, is a Thing well known to those, who read their Authors, but need not here be further mention'd, the Scripture use of this Custom being what it does most concern you to know. To hasten therefore,

How we Secondly, I am now to shew you, How *We Christians*, especially *Christians*, such of us, who are descended from the *Gentiles*, are accordingly Adopted especially such to be the Children of God. I say, how we *Christians*, for to the Jews who are descended from the *Gentiles*, did once pertain the Adoption, Rom. 9. 4. and that whole Church and Nation were once *His Children*, Deut. 14. 1. To understand which, you are to consider, that the whole World, who were the Sons of God by Creation, having Revolted from God, to serve strange Gods, then did God choose *Abraham* and his Posterity, to be a *Holy Nation*, a peculiar People unto himself, and to that purpose did Enter into Covenant with him and them, and so Adopted them to be his Children of God.

Children, instead of the rest of Mankind, who had wholly forsaken him. And hence it is said, Rom. 9. 4. that *To the Israelites did once pertain the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the Promises.* Thus the Jews alone were once the Adopted Children of God.

And now the Question returns, How we *Christians*, especially such of us who are descended from the *Gentiles*, are according, as has been spoke, Adopted to be the Children of God. And you must know, that the Covenant given to the Jews, was but a Temporary Law, to last only till they should be fit for, and till the Son of God should descend from Heaven to Institute a better, and more perfect One. Just as Children in their Minority are brought up under the Discipline of the Rod, and Ferula, and of certain outward Observances, till such time as they shall be fit for a more Manly Government; so

To last only Before that Faith, or the Gospel came, the Jews were kept under the Law, which was their School-master, to bring them to Christ: But till the Publication of the Gospel, after that Faith, or the Gospel was come, they were to be no longer under a School-master, but were to be the Children of God, by Faith in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3. 23, 24, 25, 26. that is, after they were sometime

After which Train'd up, and exercis'd to Obedience, by that severe Dispensation they, and all Christians, given by Moses, God did design to prescribe 'em, by his own Son, were to be a more Reasonable Service, namely, That contain'd in the Gospel; Children of Ordering that That should thenceforward be the Rule of Obedience, to all such as would be his Adopted Children: And accordingly God by faith in Christ.

When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to Redeem them that were under the Law, that they might receive the Adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 4, 5. that is, when that time was come, wherein God saw it fit to lay that lower Discipline, the Law of Moses aside, then God sent his own Son in Humane Flesh, who submitted to, and perform'd the whole Law himself, to Redeem 'em out of that Slavery of Mosaical Performances, and to receive them into the Participation of his Promises, and to be his Children, without those Legal Observances, by Faith in Christ, and Obedience to his Gospel. But the Jews being still of a Childish Disposition, and fond of their Chains, as People, long accustomed to Slavery, commonly are, would not forego their Legal Observances for the more Manly Religion, and more reasonable Service

Service of the Gospel of the Blessed Jesus. And thus refusing Christ, *But the Jews* in whom God did predestinate us all into the Adoption of Children by *adhering to* himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, Eph. 1. 5. the Ap- *their Law,* pottles by the appointment of God, did thereupon turn to the Gentiles *and refusing* *Christ, and* Acts 13. 46, 47. Preaching Christ and Salvation by him, unto them, *his Gospel, in* and to as many as Receiv'd him, to them gave he power, or the Right *whom God* and Priviledge, as it is in the Original, to become the Sons of God, *had predesti-* Joh. 1. 12. This is a remarkable Text to our Purpose. In the Two *nated all to be* Verses immediately before, viz. The 10, and 11, it is said, He was *his Sons,* *the Apostles* in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him *turned unto* not; he came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as *Gentiles,* *Preaching* received him, to them gave he Power, or the Right and Priviledge, to *Christ, and* be the Sons of God, even to them, who Believe in his Name. So, that by *Salvation to* this time, I hope it does fully appear to you, what is meant by a *them, and to* Child of God, especially in that sence, wherein it is to be understood *as many as* here in your Catechism. And you see, as he is not every Child by *received him,* Creation, which is a sence too wide; so neither on the other side, is *to them gave* he only One, who is so by Regeneration, which is a sence as much too *he Power to* narrow; but every one is such, who has Enter'd into Covenant *be the Sons of* with God, and whom the Heavenly Father, has thereupon Adopted *God.* into his Family, to partake of the Priviledges, which belong to his Adopted Sons, which,

Secondly, Brings me next to Enquire what a Vast Priviledge *What are the* it is, accordingly, to be *made the Children of God.* And truly upon *Priviledges,* Enquiry it will be found to be in general the very same Priviledge *which do be-* in Kind, but infinitely greater in Degree, (as Heavenly Things are *long to the* always greater than Earthly) which the most Tender and In- *Children of* dulgent Father, that is withal Wife, as well as Good, can be sup- *God, as such.* pos'd to allow his own Children, beyond what he will do to *Stran-* *In general,* *such as an in-* *dulgent, but* *wise Father,* *may be sup-* *pos'd to allow* *his Children* *beyond Ali-* *ens and* *Strangers.* *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.*

gers and Aliens. For is it natural to such a One more easily to Par- *In general,* *such as an in-* *dulgent, but* *wise Father,* *may be sup-* *pos'd to allow* *his Children* *beyond Ali-* *ens and* *Strangers.* *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* don the Offences of his Child, than of his Slave, more favourably *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* to over-look his Infirmities, more readily to hear his Requests, and *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* to instate him in a surer Title to his Possessions, than he will do *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* others, that have no such Relation to him? Why such are the Privi- *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* ledges our Heavenly Father will allow to us, who are his Children *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* by Adoption, above others, who stand in no such Relation to him. *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* He will be Just to all, but these are properly Fatherly Kindnesses, *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* and he will Indulge 'em to none therefore but those, who are his *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* Children. But more particularly,

First, It is worthy our Consideration, that we shall have this in- *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* estimable Priviledge, by being his Children, above the rest of *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* Mankind, namely, We shall have all our Sins Pardon'd, upon our *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* hearty Repentance of 'em, upon Condition we forsake 'em, and *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* return to God. The unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and all Persons *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* remaining in a State of Nature, who have not Embrac'd the Gos- *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* pel, who have not been Baptized, nor have Enter'd into Covenant *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* with God, have no Assurance from him, that their Sins should be *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* ever Pardon'd, tho' they should forsake 'em, because God never gave *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* any Promise of Pardon to any other but his Children, who are in *Particularly,* *I.* *Pardon of all* *Sins, upon* *heartly Re-* *pentance.* Covenant with him:



And for want of their having any expresse Engagements and Promises from God, of Mercies from him, does the Apostle therefore speak of the State of the Gentiles, as exceedingly Uncomfortable, *Eph. 2. 11, 12.* in these very remarkable Words, *Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time ye were without Christ, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, Strangers from the Covenants and Promises, having no hopes of Pardon, and without a God in the world.*

But we Christians, who have Enter'd into Covenant with God, and so are his Children, have the utmost Assurance possible, grounded upon the most gracious and expresse Promises, that upon laying down our Rebellious Arms, upon our Renouncing of his, and our own most mortal Enemies, our Sins, and Coming over to him, we shall have all our Sins Pardon'd. Or rather as the Apostle himself does Express it in the following, *viz. The 13, 14 ver. But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ, for he is our Peace.*

And indeed, that this Pardon and Peace with the Father, does more peculiarly belong to us under the Character of his *Children*, who had formerly stray'd afar off from him, by our Sins, but are now return'd Home to him, by Repentance; we have Exemplify'd to us in that famous Parable of the Prodigal Son, *Luke 15.* That Person, we there read, after a most Lewd and *Riotous Life*, after he had spent and squander'd away all his Substance, that his Father gave him, yet upon his deep Humiliation, for his Vile and Undutiful Behaviour towards his Father, and his hearty Desires to return Home, and to his Duty and Obedience to him, was thereupon admitted to his former Interest in his Father's Affections; Yea, and receiv'd with more than usual Joy. Why, the whole Design of that Parable is to shew us, how our Heavenly Father will graciously deal with us, his Undutiful and Rebellious Children; and that after, even a very Ill Life, upon our laying down of our Sins, the forsaking the service of our Lusts, and Return to him, he will graciously Pardon and Forgive us, his *Children*.

II. And, Secondly, being his *Children*, he will not be severe to mark what is done amiss, tho' after our Return to him, through the Infirmary of our *Flesh*, we do not altogether Live up to the Rule, by an Unsinning Obedience, provided we watch carefully against the common Infirmities of Humane Nature, and do not wilfully Indulge our selves in any of 'em. The Rigour of the First Covenant would admit of no less than a *Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience*, the never Offending in any One Point. *In the day thou dost Eat thereof thou shalt surely dye, Gen. 2. 17.* But here under the Second, our Father deals with us with the Indulgence of a tender Parent, who does not throw off his Child, and withdraw his Kindness upon the smallest Offences, and such as through Ignorance, Surprise, or the like, cannot in this our fall'n and corrupt State be avoided: *But as a Father pitieth his own Children, even so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, that is, Who do not willingly displease him, Psal. 103. 13.*

In a word, As the Pardon of Sins, whether great, or small, is a Mercy held out to us only in the Covenant of Grace, so it is granted us under this very Notion, of being Children of God, as appears from



from *Mal.* 3. 17: where the Prophet foretels the Happy State of Christians, upon this very Score, in these words, *And they shall be mine*, saith the Lord of Hosts, *in that day, when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own Son, that serveth him.* And more particularly yet, *Eph.* 1. 3. 5. 7. Forgiveness of Sins is there specify'd, as the distinct Priviledge of *Adopted Sons*, in these words; *God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his Will; in him we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.*

And, Thirdly, which is an Appendage to this same Priviledge; *A Child of God*, upon the Score of such his Relation, is permitted to have an easy Access to the Throne of Grace; and is admitted to Address himself in Prayer to God, as for whatever other Mercies he stands in need of, so for Pardon of Sins, when he has Transgressed, with a full Assurance of a gracious Answer. The Gentiles, who serv'd no Gods, but what their own Imaginations created, did it after a Slavish manner; for how could they be sure the Offended Deity was to be Entreated, when he had Reveal'd no such thing unto 'em? And so did the Jews also, who serv'd the True God, it was in a Servile manner too, for when they had committed an Offence against the Law, they were to provide their Sacrifice, and bring it to the Priest, and he was to Offer it for 'em, whilst they stood at a distance. But now the Veil of the Sanctuary being broke, upon the Death of our High-Priest, *We have therefore the Liberty to enter into the Holiest, by the Blood of Jesus, by a New and Living way, which he hath Consecrated for us, through the Veil, that is to say, his Flesh: And having him our High Priest over the House of God, we may hence-forward draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience,* *Heb.* 10. 19, 20, 21, 22. that is, Every Christian, provided he comes not with the guilt of any unrepented Sin upon his Conscience, may himself now Offer up his own Prayers to God through Christ, without the Mediation of any other Priest, or Sacrifice, and that with a full Assurance of being graciously heard and answer'd.

And that this Faith and full Assurance, with which we may Approach unto God, to Pray to him for the Forgiveness of Sins, is our Priviledge only, as we are the Sons of God by Adoption, is plain from *St. Paul*, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again unto fear, as under the Law, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry unto God, Abba Father.* And again, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Because ye are thus made his Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.*

And now Lastly, If there be any other very considerable Priviledge, accruing to a Child of God, from such his Relation, it is, That God will more surely Instate him in the Inheritance of Heaven, than he will do others, that have no such Relation to him: *And, indeed, if Children of God, then Heirs, we are told, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ,* *Rom.* 8. 17. But the Vastness of this will be best consider'd by us, when we come to the Explication of that Third, and the last of those Priviledges made over to us, on God's Part, in the Covenant of Grace; viz. What it is to be an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

## III.

*To the Children of God is granted an easier Access by Prayer, to the Throne of Grace, for Pardon of Sins, and other Mercies.*

*Lastly, A Child of God is more surely instated in the Inheritance of Heaven, than others.*

And

*The infinite  
reason we  
have to praise  
God for these  
Advantages.*

And now, upon the Review of what has been said, in the Exposition of this present Article, In what Admiration of God's Goodness may we all of us cry out with St. *John*, 1 Epist. 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestow'd upon us, that we should be call'd the Sons of God?* And what infinite Reason have we, with St. *Paul*, thankfully to Praise him for it, *Eph.* 1. 3. 5. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath Blessed us Christians, with all Spiritual Blessings in, and concerning Heavenly Places, and Concerns of the World to come, through Christ; having Predestinated us to the Adoption, and Priviledges of Children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will.*

*He Adopted us to be his Children according to the good Pleasure of his Will.* This Priviledge, that we should be his Children, is Attended with very rich Advantages, all which have accru'd to us, not from any Merit and Desert of ours, being suppos'd Enemies unto him; but only from his free Goodness towards us, which was pleas'd so to determine it. And as it is both Great and Free, we ought certainly, with all possible Acknowledgments, to Magnify and Extol, both his infinite Condescension and Goodness, and our own unspeakable Priviledge and Dignity therein. "Indeed, for God to be a Father by "Creation and Providence (as One observes) tho' it be a Mercy, "yet it is no Priviledge; for in that Sence he is *Parens rerum*, the "common Parent of all things: But, that God should be thy Father "by Adoption, that he should make thee his Son, through his only "Begotten Son, that he should rake up Dirt and Filth, as thou art, "and lay it in his Bosom; that he should take Aliens and Strangers "near unto himself, and Adopt Enemies and Rebels into his Family: "Register their Names in the Book of Life, make them Heirs of "Glory, Co-heirs with Jesus Christ, his Eternal Son, as the Apostle "doth admiringly re-count it, *Rom.* 8. 17. This is Mercy and Miracle both. It is, indeed, an invaluable Grace and Favour, that we should be Adopted his Children, were it only for this, that he will be ready to Pardon our Sins and Infirmities, and will Admit us favourably to Address our Selves, and Prayers to him. But this Priviledge of being his Children will farther appear, to be beyond all Expression, Great, since, if Children, as the Apostle infers, *Rom.* 8. 17. then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ; If a *Child of God*, then, which Crowns all the rest of his Covenanted Mercies, *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*, which yet, it is said we shall be; But what, and how Great that Third, and Last Priviledge of the Covenant is, I am in the Explication of the next Article to declare unto you.

T H E

T H E

# Eighth Lecture.

And an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven.

**H**AVING hitherto spoke to the Two First Priviledges, made over to us in the Covenant of Grace, that thereby we are First made *Members of Christ*, and Secondly, *Children of God*. Having both Explain'd to you the Meaning and Importance of those Two Articles, and laid out to you the Vastness of those Priviledges and Advantages, contain'd therein; I come now in like manner, to Explain to you the Third, which is, that we are made thereby *Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And indeed, this Last does necessarily follow from the other: For as St. Paul speaks, *Rom. 8. 17. If Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ.*

This is the Perfection of all God's Promises and Favours, vouchsafed in the Second Covenant. It comes last, and Crowns all the rest. And it will be the certain Reward of all those, that persevere to the end of their Lives in well-doing, and in sincere Obedience (notwithstanding all Temptations to the contrary) to God's most Righteous Commands. *Be faithful unto Death*, says our Saviour, *and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10. And that you may thoroughly understand the vast Greatness of this most extraordinary Priviledge, made over to you by Covenant, so as to be excited thereby to render your selves worthy to be Partakers thereof; according to my usual Method I will Explain to you,

First, What is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

Secondly, What it Imports to be an *Inheritour* of it.

And then Lastly, I will lay out before you, the Vastness of our Priviledge, in being *made Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

And First, I am to Explain unto you, what is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*. The Kingdom of Heaven is an Expression we do meet with above Thirty times in the New Testament; and I think we may safely say, That we are constantly to understand by it, either First, *The Kingdom of Grace in this Life*, or Secondly, *The Kingdom of Glory in the Life to come*.

By the *Kingdom of Grace in this Life*, I mean, that Happy and Blessed State of us Christians, now under the Gospel, wherein we Enjoy the Happiness of Living under a Government, wholly made up of manifold Graces and Favours; having a most Gracious God governing us by most Gracious and Reasonable Laws, affording us a plentiful Measure of Divine Grace and Assistance to perform these

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By the Kingdom of Heaven, is meant in Scripture, either First, the Kingdom of Grace in this Life, or Secondly, the Kingdom of Glory, in the Life to come. The Kingdom of Grace, the Laws Gospel State.



Laws, and proposing to us most Encouraging Rewards in Heaven, to stir us up to a diligent Observance of 'em.

It is this happy State of Things, under the Title of the *Kingdom of Heaven*, whose near approach *John* the Baptist foretold in the Wilderness, saying, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, that is, the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, or the State of the Gospel, whose Great, Fundamental, and Gracious Law, is this, that all Sinners must Repent 'em of all their former Sins, and upon their Repentance they shall have most Eminent Mercies, bestowed upon 'em. And it was this State also, concerning the undue Entertainment of which by the Scribes and Pharisees, our Saviour complain'd, *Matth. 11. 12.* saying, that *From the days of John the Baptist, even till then, the Kingdom of Heaven suffered Violence, so that the Violent took it by force*; that is, the Publicans, and Sinners, and Gentiles, who were look'd upon by the Jews, as those, who had no right to the *Messiah*, and so as violent Persons, as Invaders and Intruders, did crowd into the Church at the Preaching of the Gospel, whilst the Scribes and Pharisees ungratefully and proudly stood off. So again, *Matth. 13. 24.* *The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a Man, which sowed good Seed in his Field*; that is, the State of the Gospel, or the Success of our Saviour's Preaching in the World, is so resembled. And so likewise in several other Parables of the like Nature, by the *Kingdom of Heaven* is to be understood the state of the Gospel here on Earth; which sure does shew the exceeding great Dignity, Worth and Excellency of the Gospel State, far beyond any other Dispensation, either Patriarchal, or Mosaical, which the World had ever Receiv'd from Heaven before.

The reason why the Gospel State should be dignify'd with the Title of the Kingdom of Heaven.

viz. Because it so directly tends to render Men so exactly like the Blessed Saints, the Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And indeed upon a near View of the Nature and Design of the Gospel Dispensation, we shall see sufficient reason, why that State, above any other, should be so honourably Entitled the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And the reason is not only because the same God governs us, and that by the same Laws of Eternal, Unalterable Righteousness and Goodness, as in Heaven, but also because this Blessed Government of God over us by the Laws of the Gospel, does directly tend to render us so exactly like the Blessed Saints, those Inhabitants of Heaven; for where the Gospel of Christ does so far prevail upon Men, as through the Grace of God to make them diligent and careful to Obey him, according as they have Covenanted with him, it does bring in such an excellent State of Things, as makes a kind of Heaven here upon Earth; for where the Gospel does so far prevail, as to be sincerely Obey'd; it causes that *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lyon and Fatling together, and a young Child shall lead them, and it causes that they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all the holy Mountain, for the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*, as was long time since Prophecy'd, *Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.* concerning the State of the Gospel; that is, it files off the roughness, and sweetens the cruel and savage Humours of Men, so that instead of tearing and tormenting one another like Beasts and Devils, it makes Men Gentle, and Kind, and good Natur'd, like Angels, like Gods to one another. A State certainly which may very well deserve the glorious Title of the Kingdom of Heaven, being so contrary

trary to the *Kingdom of Darkness*, and the State of Hell, where there is nothing but Malice, Rancour and Rage do reign among those unhappy Beings, that do inhabit that Place. And thus you see that in Scripture, by the Kingdom of Heaven is sometimes meant the State of the Gospel, the same God governing us therein, and by the same everlasting Laws of Goodness, as in Heaven, and so as to render us of like Tempers and Dispositions with the Saints in Heaven. A State so nearly resembling that of Heaven, that the Condition of the meanest Christian now under the Gospel, is, for that reason, prefer'd before that of the greatest of Prophets under the Law; *Verily I say unto you, among them, who are born of Women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the Gospel State, is greater than he, Matth. 11. 11.*

But tho' this be very frequently the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven in the New Testament; and for that reason, I have took such particular Notice of it, that so you may know how to understand that Metaphorical Expression in those many Scriptures, where you will meet with it in that sense; yet it is not the proper and immediate Meaning of the Word in Scripture, nor is it so to be understood here in your Catechism.

*This is not the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven, here in the Catechism.*

But Secondly, the Kingdom of Heaven does, if not most frequently, at least most properly signify in the Scripture, the Kingdom of Glory; and accordingly here in your Catechism it is solely to be understood of the glorious and happy State of Angels and Saints with God in Heaven. For Instance, In this sense it is to be understood, *Mat. 5. 3.* where the Kingdom of Heaven is promis'd as the Reward of the Poor in Spirit. And so *ver. 20.* where it is said, that *Except our Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;* that is, into the State of Glory. And in this sense only it can be understood, *Mat. 7. 21.* where our Saviour declares, that *Not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of the Father, which is in Heaven;* that is, not only those, who barely profess Christianity, but those, who sincerely Practice according to such a Belief and Profession shall be received into Glory. The Profession alone will gain Admittance into the Visible Church here on Earth, but nothing less than a Living up to it, will give an Entrance into the Kingdom and State of Glory, with God and his Holy Angels, and Saints in the Highest Heavens.

*II. The Kingdom of Heaven signifies the Kingdom of Glory.*

And a most Noble and Glorious State we may be sure this is, or else it would not be Dignify'd with so Honourable and Glorious a Title, as the *Kingdom of Heaven*, a Kingdom being the Top and Height of all Earthly Glories, as Heaven is a Place, which comprehends all future Excellencies. To denote therefore that most exalted State of Bliss in Heaven, it is, that this State is call'd the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And truly there is nothing in this World, wherein we can imagine the greatest Glory and Happiness, as a Kingdom, a Crown, a Throne, a Marriage, a Feast, but are set forth as Emblems to represent to us the Joys and Glories of our future State. And yet, as if a Kingdom, a Crown, a Throne were infinitely too short, to set forth the Joys and Glories of Heaven, and those in-

*This, a most noble and glorious State, as being dignify'd with so honourable and glorious a Title, as the Kingdom of Heaven.*



Hence all finite Blessings, that do await the Sons of God, Saint John tells those things us, It doth not yet appear what we shall be, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Beloved, now in this world, we are the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, only wherein we conceive the highest Glory and Happiness, are any thing in 'em, whereby they may represent the Joys above, us'd, as Em- St. Paul tells us, 1 Cor. 2. 9. That Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive the things, which God hath prepared for those, that love him; Nay, and tho' he was caught up to the Third Heaven, into Paradise, and so did both see and hear the Glories and Triumphant Joys of that Place, yet the Things, which he saw, and heard were unspeakable, he tells us, which it is not possible for Man to utter, for so it may be render'd, 2 Cor. 12. 4. So that in short, the Kingdom of Heaven does import a State of the most excessive Glory and Happiness, that our Natures can be capable of receiving; A State so unspeakably Honourable and Delightful, that tho' the choicest Things of this World, those Things, that yield the vastest Contentments, are made use of in Scripture to represent them to us, yet they are but the meer shadows of the Glories and Joys in the Kingdom of Heaven; and after all, there is abundantly more than can be Express'd, or Imagin'd by us. And therefore this must suffice here for the Explication of what is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven, the particular Character of whose Joys, being what more properly belongs to that Article of your Creed, *The Life Everlasting*, shall there be given you. And now

All which things come short of expressing it.

An Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven, What?

Secondly, Let us next see, what it is to be an *Inheritour of it*. An Inheritour, or Heir, both in Scripture, and in common Language, does import something of Priviledge more than ordinary: Thus Gen. 21. 16. we find, that Sarah would not endure that the Son of the Bond-woman should enjoy the Priviledge to be Heir with her Son. And as to common Account, every Body knows that an Heir has a considerable Priviledge above the rest of the Children, and what it is, I shall define as follows;

An Heir is one, who has a legal Right and Title to a Possession made over to him.

An Heir among Men is one, that receives from Parents, or Predecessors, either by nearness of Blood, or by Adoption, by Entail, or by Will; or whatever other Method of Conveyance, a sure Right and Title to a Possession. And here perhaps it might not be difficult to shew how that an *Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven* is made such by something, that bears a near Resemblance, at leastwise, to all these Ways and Methods, whereby Men become Heirs to Temporal Possessions. But not to insist upon any nice Comparison in these Matters, it is sufficient to Ensure unto us the Benefits of Heirship, even to the Kingdom of Heaven, that those, who are in Covenant with God, are frequently in Scripture styl'd Heirs; and particularly Heb. 1. 14. *Heirs of Salvation*, and that they are in like manner, and to all Intents and Purposes as much Heirs, as Children are Heirs, for thus the Apostle argues, *If Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. And if a Son, then an Heir through Christ, Gal. 4. 7. So that we may safely say, That as an Heir is One, whose Estate is not precariously depending upon the meer

Such who have Enter'd into the Covenant of Grace, are in like manner



meer Will and Pleasure of another, but so settled and secur'd to him, as to give him a Legal Claim and Title thereto, so long as he does not forfeit his Title, by not performing the Condition on which his Title depends; so an Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven is One, who does not depend meerly upon the *Uncovenanted Goodness of God*, for his hopes of Heaven and Happiness; but he is One, to whom God through Christ, has vouchsafed to grant a Legal Claim and Title thereto, by giving his solemn Promise, and engaging his Truth for the Performance, that he will infallibly bestow upon him the most unspeakable Joys of Heaven, provided he swerves not from his Allegiance and Obedience to him, but Renouncing all God's Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, will Believe in him, and Obey him truly and faithfully all the days of his Life.

*Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, as Children are Heirs.*

I do say, (and pray mark it) That God, *through Christ*, has vouchsafed to grant us a Legal Claim and Title to this Inheritance; for so it is said, that we are Heirs *through Christ*, Gal. 4. 7. And far be it from any to imagine, that there is any thing of Merit, or Worth in our imperfect Obedience, whereby of it self it should deserve such a precious Inheritance. It would be an Arrogance and Presumption in the highest Saint, that ever liv'd, and such as would render him more liable to be punisht for his Pride, than rewarded for his Vertue, should he pretend to Claim Heaven, meerly upon the Score of his own Sanctity; or should he pretend a Claim and Title to the Inheritance of Heaven at all, otherwise than *through Christ*, and because God has promis'd it. However, since God has been pleas'd to Ensure it to us by Covenant, we may safely call it a Right, which God, who is Faithful in all his Promises, and Just in all his Dealings, will never debar us of; except by our Disloyalty and Disobedience to him, we forfeit all Right and Title to it. Which brings me to my

*It is through Christ alone, not owing to the Merit of our Obedience, that we are Intitled to the Inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Third Proposal, which was to lay before you the Vastness of our Privilege, in being *made Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And if we do but consider it, it will soon appear to be both in it self *very great*, and in Comparison of what the rest of the World enjoys, a very *singular Privilege*, this, of being *made Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

*The Vastness of a Christian's Privilege, in being made an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

I say, *In it self very Great*. Indeed, what can be greater, than to have the invaluable Possessions of Heaven, so settled and ensur'd to us, as to have a *Legal Claim and Title* thereto, made over to us *in Christ*. We see, as to those Earthly Possessions, how an Heir does value his Condition above the rest of the Children, not only on the account of a greater share, commonly in the Estate, than the rest; but because of the greater security he has of Enjoying those Earthly Possessions; An Inheritance being an Estate, for which he does not so precariously depend, as has been shew'd, upon the meer arbitrary and uncertain Will and Pleasure of another, but a Right, which without breach of Justice cannot be detain'd from him. It is the Privilege of an Heir, that he has all the Security, that the Engagements of an Honest Person, and the Solemnities of a Covenant can give him, to make him a Title; but when the *Kingdom of Heaven* is the Possession, and when he, who cannot deceive, has solemnly settled

*I. It is in it self a very Great Privilege to have the invaluable Possessions of Heaven, so settled and ensur'd, as to have a legal Claim and Title thereto made over to One.*

this Inheritance upon us ; this is a Priviledge so much beyond what Words can exprefs, that it is far easier to be Admir'd, than Utter'd.

II. An as it is in it self exceeding Great, so it is, if compar'd with what If compar'd Others enjoy, a very singular Priviledge, This, of being made In- with what o- heritours of the Kingdom of Heaven. To be made Inheritours of the thers enjoy, Kingdom of Heaven, I say, is a very singular Priviledge, which those, it is a singu- who are without Christ, and who are Strangers to the Covenants and Pro- lar Privi- mise, do not enjoy. True it is, a few of the more Contemplative ledge. and Thinking amongst the Gentile Philosophers, did raise to them-

*The best a- mongst the Moral Hea- thens could have but faint Hopes, built upon un- certain Con- jectures, of a future Hap- piness.* selves some faint Hopes, and doubtful Expectations of a future Hap- piness after this Life. They consider'd the noble Nature of the Soul of Man to be such, that nothing in this Life is of that Excellency, as to give it a full Satisfaction ; and as to the Body, they look'd upon it more, as the Prison of the Soul, than any Advantage to it, and therefore they did hope to be deliver'd one Day from its Incumber- ance ; that the Soul might be at liberty to Act freely, without such a clog of Flesh washing it in all its noble Flights and Operations : But then all this was in them but Conjecture, what possibly might be, not what certainly would be their Happiness. And being but a

*And their faint Hope, and uncertain Expectation, built upon doubtful Reason- ings of their own, and more their Wishes and Desires, than what Hopes being faint, they they could certainly promise themselves ; they were not able to could not in support their drooping Spirits, under any great Difficulties, and to the Strength thereof over- overcome in the Strength of such an Expectation, the greater Temp- tations and Tryals of their Vertue : But did generally shrink from come great Temptations. their Vertuous Professions, when to Act honestly, was become dan- gerous. But the Christian's Expectation of an Inheritance in Heaven, But the Chri- stian's Hopes being founded upon the Express Promises of the God of Truth ; are sure and those Promises given in Covenant, and so Confirm'd by an stedfast, be- Oath, as it were, For God, willing more abundantly to shew to the Heirs ing founded of Promise, the Immutability of his Counsel, Confirmed it by an Oath, upon the ex- that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we press Promi- might have a strong Consolation : These things being so, the Christian has ses and Cove- a hope, which as an Anchor of the Soul, is both sure and stedfast, Heb. 6. nant of the 17, 18, 19. And his Hope being thus built, not upon uncertain God of Truth Conjectures, but upon the exprefs Promises of God, who cannot*

*lie ; there is no Temptation so alluring, nor Suffering so great, that And being such, there is such a Hope will not be able to overcome ; But he, that hath this Hope, no Temptati- purifieth himself, even as God is pure, 1 Joh. 3. 3. And may with St. on so alluring, Paul be perswaded, That neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Prin- nor Suffering cipalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, so great, w<sup>o</sup> nor Depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate him from the he may not o- Love of God, which is in Christ, Rom. 8. 38, 39. Thus certain are vercome. the Christians hopes of Heaven, it being Instated upon him, as an Inheritance. And having his Hopes so well grounded, there is no difficulty in the way of Duty so great, which he may not overcome by the Strength thereof : Whereas the best of the Moral Heathens had but uncertain Conjectures to ground their Expectations of fu- ture Happiness upon ; and their Hopes thereof being so Weak, they presently yielded to the Assault of every great Temptation.*

But

## Lect. VIII. *Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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But besides, whatever certainly an honest Pagan, that liv'd up to the Light of Nature, and the Dictates of Right Reason (if any of 'em can be suppos'd to have done so) might have, that the good God would reward his Vertue: Yet having only the Equity and *Uncovenanted goodness of God* to depend upon, he could promise himself no greater a Measure of Happiness, than what his good Deeds did of themselves deserve; which considering the Imperfection of the best Actions of the best of Men, whoever liv'd, how short must that fall of what is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*. \* But the Christian, whom God has Covenanted withal, and to whom he has condescended to Oblige himself to make sure a *Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. may without Presumption rely upon God's both Truth and Goodness, to make good to him the same, notwithstanding when he does all that he can, consider'd in himself, he is but an *Unprofitable Servant*, as the best are. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth, says the Apostle, (and so may every good Christian say the same) there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but to all them, who love his appearing,* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Such is the Christian's Privilege, above a Pagan, in being made an *Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven*, in that it is his Inheritance, he may assure himself of it, tho' his imperfect Vertues consider'd in themselves, could never Entitle him to such an Eternal and Exceeding weight of Glory.

In short, It is *Jesus Christ alone, who hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. And as he only has brought it to light, that is, made a clear Revelation of that Life and Immortal Happiness, laid up for Righteous Men in Heaven, which was not before so certainly Reveal'd; so it is only through him, and by Believing, and Embracing, and Coming into his Covenant, the Gospel, that Salvation must now be hop'd for by any; for so we are also Assur'd, *Acts 4. 12. and that there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, but Jesus only, whereby we must be saved*; so that this Invaluable Privilege, this exceeding great Advantage of being made Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven, is made over, and certainly Ensur'd to such only, who are in the Covenant of Grace; and is the Third and Last of those Excellent Privileges and Advantages contain'd and held forth therein. But then the Kingdom of Heaven is the certain Inheritance of the sincere Christian, who in the Exercise of Mercy, Meekness, Piety, and all other Christian Vertues, which he has Covenanted with God to perform, does faithfully discharge his Part of the Covenant; as is most solemnly declar'd, *Matth. 25. 31, 32, 33, 34. 46. with which I shall conclude this Point. Says our Blessed Saviour there, When the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory. And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats, and he shall set the Sheep on his right hand, but the Goats on the left. Then shall the King say*

\* But a Christian, to whom God has Covenanted, to make sure a Crown of Glory may, without Presumption, rely upon him, to make good the same.



unto them on his right hand, to his Charitable, and Pious, and Faithful Servants, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.* And as the *Wicked shall go into everlasting Punishment, so the Righteous into Life Eternal.*

*A summ of those invaluable Priviledges, made over to us, on God's Part in the Covenant of Grace.*

And now to summ up those infinitely Gracious and Invaluable Priviledges, made over to us on God's Part, in the Covenant of Grace; hereby we are made, First, *Members of Christ*, that is, are made Members of that Body, of which Christ is the Head, *viz.* The Church; and so have, together with a most excellent Body of Religion and Laws, all necessary Grace and Assistance, Convey'd and Communicated to us Members, from Him, the Head, to Enliven, Support and Enable us to go through all our Task of Religious Duties, and Christian Performances, requir'd at our hands.

The Second Priviledge is, That we are also hereby *made Children of God*, that is, having Embrac'd Christianity, and being Incorporated into the Church of Christ, we are thereby Adopted and Chosen out of the rest of the World by God, to enjoy this grand Priviledge of Sons, to have Pardon granted us when, with the Prodigal Son, we return Home to him, to our Offended, but Gracious Father, by Repentance: And we shall find him not over-severe, in respect of our lesser Failings, and the unavoidable Infirmities of our Nature, but shall always have him ready to hear our Prayers for Mercy, both in respect of our greater and lesser Transgressions.

And Lastly, The Third Priviledge, you have been now told, is this, that to compleat All, We are *made Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*, that is, have secur'd to us a Right and Title to the unspeakable Joys and Glories of Heaven. A Priviledge, which consider'd in it self, is exceeding Great, and as all the rest, if compar'd with what Others enjoy, is a very *singular* One.

These now are the inestimable Priviledges, made over to us in the Covenant of Grace. Priviledges, which as they are of infinite Advantage to us, so we shall never fail of obtaining 'em, if we will but take care to perform the Conditions requir'd on our Parts; and so, First, *Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful lusts of the Flesh*, on Condition, Secondly, *That we will Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.* And Thirdly, *Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our Lives.* Which Conditions, and what they Import, I come next to declare unto you.

T H E

## Ninth Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.**

**I** Have already Expounded those infinitely Gracious and Invaluable *Privileges*, made over to us, on God's Part, in the Covenant of Grace; having shew'd you, what it is to be a *Member of Christ*, what it is to be a *Child of God*, and lastly, what to be an *Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven*; as also, what are the vast Benefits contain'd in those several Articles; I am now come to Explain to you likewise the *Conditions* of the Covenant; those Conditions, without the Performance of which, those Mercies will not be Confer'd on us.

For this we must seriously consider, that the Benefits now mention'd to be made over to us, as they are in themselves exceeding great, so as almost to equal us with the Blessed Angels; and as they were purchas'd for us at no less a Rate, than the precious Blood of the Son of God; so we must not expect that Benefits so infinitely great, and dearly Purchas'd, shall be Confer'd upon us, without any thing to be done on our Parts, to express our Value of them; much less if we continue in Rebellion against God, and instead of him, serve under his Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; or will be Infidels and Unbelievers, and will remain Disobedient to all his most Just and Righteous Commands. No, it is not to be imagin'd, that God will be so Easy, so fond of Sinners, as would reflect upon the Wisdom and Discretion of a meer Man. But as he does propose to us *Invaluable Blessings*, so he does require from us a *Reasonable Service*, and the Performance of most Equitable Conditions; amongst which, this is the First, that we should *Renounce* &c.

And as I have already Explain'd to you the Importance of those vast *Favours on God's part*; so I will proceed now to do the same, as to those *Conditions on ours*, shewing you

First, *What it is to Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.*

Here is as much Matter as can possibly be crowded into so few Words. A great Part of the Christian Life is discharged in what these Words do mean: For our Christian Race is represented in Scripture to be for the most part a Warfare against several very Powerful Enemies, both without and within us. And those

these Words do Instruct you both what those Enemies are, and how we must War against them. Wherefore, if in the Explication of Words so very full of Meaning, and of such vast Concernment to be understood by you, I shall be forc'd to run out into some considerable Length, you must have Patience, and you must give good heed to what I shall Discourse upon them, answerable to the Benefit, may accrue to you from the through understanding thereof. That which I shall do towards the Explication of them, shall be this;

First, I will shew you who the Devil is, and what are his Works, what is meant by Renouncing the Devil, and all his Works, and how absolutely necessary it is we should do so.

Secondly, I will also shew you what is meant by the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and how far you must Renounce the wicked World, with its Poms and Vanity.

Lastly, I will in like manner, open unto you, what is to be understood by the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and how far we must Renounce them.

And, First, I am to shew you who the Devil is, what are his Works, what is meant by Renouncing the Devil, and all his Works, and how absolutely necessary it is we should do so.

*The Devil, his Names, and their importance.*

Whereof First, Let us enquire who the Devil is. And in Scripture he is call'd by different Names, whereof some do import his Rank and Place, as *Baalzebub*, signifying him to be a Prince of Devils; and some his Wickedness and Enmity, as *Διάβολος*, signifying a Calumniator, or a false Accuser; *Satan*, an Adversary; from his Fury and Murderous Temper, he is call'd a *Roaring Lion*; and from his Craft and Lying Policies, an *Old and subtle Serpent*; and from both perhaps he is call'd the *Dragon*. There are many Legions of 'em in Number, but One supreme in Power; and He it is, who is Chief of all the Enemies, both of God and Man, that presents himself at the Head of all the rest, being that Arch-Rebel and Traitor against God. He was once, as seems from his Superiority to Michael the Arch-Angel, who upon that account *Durst not bring a railing accusation against him*, Jude 8. 9. The highest Angel, the most glorious Spirit, and the First be-like of all the Angelical Orders: But not content with that vast Power and Glory, that God had bestow'd on him, but Envyng that God, that gave it, and affecting, perhaps, no less than a Sovereignty himself; He, with many Legions of the lower Order of Angels, whom he drew into the same horrid and ungrateful Conspiracy, Revolted from God, and set himself to Oppose his Government. But no sooner did this wicked Apostate frame so horrid a Design, but the All-knowing and infinitely Powerful God of Heaven and Earth perceiving his Intentions, immediately hurl'd him down, and all his wicked Crew of ungrateful Conspirators, from the Battlements of Heaven, into those dark Mansions of Sorrow, which we call Hell, there to be *Reserved in everlasting Chains under darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day*, Jude 6. as the due Punishment of his so black and ungrateful a Treason against his Sovereign and Bountiful Creator. But so far was this hardned Rebel against God, from Repenting of his Villany, even under the sad Experience of the woful Issue of it, That he is ever since acted with the highest Spirit of Revenge against his

*He was once one of the highest Angels, and is now that Arch-Rebel against God.*

*He, with many Legions of Inferior Angels, whom he drew into the same Conspiracy, is banish'd Heaven.*



his God ; and because he finds it in vain to Attempt any thing immediately against God himself, he studies and endeavours all he can ever since, to wound him in his Authority and Honour. For no sooner did the Almighty Create the lower World, and place Man in the midst of it, as of a Temple, to set forth his Praises, and to glorify his Creator's infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness in this stupendious a Work of the Creation ; but this grand Enemy, Attacks him with all the Subtily and Policy of a Traytor, tempting him to dis-believe his Maker's Goodness and kind Intentions towards him, to cast off his Authority, and disobey his Laws, and rather to follow his pernicious Counsels. The *Arch-Rebel* prevails, and the whole *Representative* World of Men, *Adam* and *Eve*, Revolted from their God, and took part with the Devil. And tho' God condescending himself to propose Terms of Accommodation in a Saviour and Redeemer, which was for to come, recover'd a part of Mankind, both before and after the Flood, and afterwards selected the whole Nation of the *Jews* to be a peculiar People unto him, set apart to serve him ; yet through the Instigation of Satan, the greater part of Mankind were absolutely the Devil's Vassals, serving him in abominable Idolatries, Sorceries, Witchcrafts ; and being instigated by him, to all manner of Villanies, Vices, and Sins whatsoever, whereby the Laws of God could be transgress'd, or his Authority utterly Banish'd (as far as lay in their power) from amongst the Sons of Men. And thus the Devil usurpt an Authority over almost the whole World for many Thousand Years, till such time, as our Saviour came amongst us to Preach Repentance, and to recover us to the Knowledge, and the Service of the One True God, which was the occasion of his Coming.

*Being affected with a Spirit of Revenge against God, he afterwards withdrew Man-kind to join with him in his Rebellion.*

*And prevailed so far, till God's Authority was almost utterly banished from amongst Men.*

*Which occasion'd the Son of God coming into the World, to recover Mankind.*

So that you see the Devil is that Arch-Rebel, who with his whole Legion of Infernal Spirits, are continually mustering up all their Forces, against the Authority of God, and drawing wretched sinful Men into the Conspiracy ; and whose Quarrel is for no less than Dominion and Empire, who shall be King, God, or Satan. And thus you plainly see, who the Devil is.

Secondly, Let us enquire what are the *Works of the Devil* ; and from what hath been said, his Works in general do appear,

*The works of the Devil in general are*

First, *To be Sin.*

And, Secondly, *The tempting of us to Sin.*

*His first work was to Sin himself, by transgressing God's Laws, and despising his Authority.* His next work was to Tempt and Inveigle us likewise into the same Violation and Contempt of the Divine Laws and Authority, by committing of Sin.

*I. Sin.*

And the first general Work of the Devil is Sin, for so it is expressly affirm'd, *1 Job. 3. 8. The Devil sinneth from the beginning, and for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil, that is Sin.* By Sin the Laws of God are transgress'd, his Authority thrown off, his Government disown'd, and his Power defy'd ; and as the Devil made himself what he is, by thus sinning at first ; so this is his continual Practice, his constant Work ever since : And whosoever in imitation of him, does likewise at any time Transgress, or walk contrary to the Laws, the Rules, the Ways that God hath set, (especially if knowingly and wilful)

*By Sin God's Authority is thrown off, which is the Devil's constant work,*

*Whoever does thereby in like manner, as the Devil did, throw off God's Authority, disown his Power, and defy his Government, and so does wilfully sin, do the Works of the Devil. Which one Consideration should make you abominate even the least Sin, but especially it should make you infinitely fearful of Sinning wilfully against your Maker.*

*Most People, alas! In these degenerate Times, make but a Mock For which of Sin, and make it the subject of their Mirth and Laughter, when reason no Sin committed by themselves, or others, for want of seriously considering this to be its Nature. But the Commission of the least wilful Sin, would be dreaded by you, and frown'd upon in others, if you would but consider how high it strikes, even at God himself, and whom it Advances to his right of Dominion over the World, even the Devil.*

*Some Sins But as there are some particular Sins, which are more directly more particularly the level'd against God's Authority, and express more of the natural Temper and Disposition of Satan, and are more his own Practice works of the Devil. than others; so of those we may say, that they are more particularly and especially the Works of the Devil.*

*I. And first as to those, which are more directly level'd against God's Authority, and are therefore Sins of Satan's own Invention, to draw us off from God; of this sort we are to reckon Idolatry, or the Worshipping of other Gods, besides him, the Only True God; whether it be that of the Barbarous Nations, who worshipt the Devil himself; or whether that of the Gentiles in general, and some Gentiliz'd Christians, as the Papists, who *Worshipped the Creature, above, besides, or together with the Creator*, as that place, *Rom. 1. 25.* may indifferently be render'd. The Idolatry of either Kind, either the Worship of Devils, Heroes, or of Saints departed, does more particularly bear upon it the Character of a Work of the Devil, because it is more directly level'd against God's Authority, giving his Honour to another. And*

*Sorcery, Of the same sort is Sorcery, and Charming, and Witch-craft, and Charming, Conjuring, as also the Sin of those wretchedly wicked Persons, Witch-craft, who Resort to Conjurers, and Charmers, and Witches, White, or Black and Conjuring, (as some do foolishly distinguish them, for both do deal with the Devil, by unlawful Arts) whoever, I say, do resort to any such Persons, or such as are so reputed, to enquire out their lost Goods, or what shall be hereafter their Fortune, or to receive Directions for Health, or Thriving; or if they use themselves any Spells and Charms to these, or the like Purposes; such do commit a principal Work of the Devil, because they hold thereby a Commerce and Correspondence with Satan, who is God's most bitter Enemy, and do put their Faith and Confidence in him for Help, making him, viz. the Devil, instead of God, their Staff and Stay: And lastly, do commit that Sin, which is the particular Invention of the Devil, and is therefore often in the Holy Scriptures, as for Instance, *Deut. 18.* Detested as such an Abomination, and Threaten'd with such heavy Penalties, as must argue those, who can use such unlawful Means for Health, or for finding out lost Goods, to be even utterly destitute of any Fear of God, and such, who wholly give themselves up to fear, and serve only the Devil; and I hope therefore, as common as it is, it will be*

De-

Detested by you. But the Divine Indignation is so fully Exprest against all the Sins of this Kind, in this 18th of *Deut.* 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. that I must not forbear to give you the very Words themselves, as those, which are most likely to Deter you from such high Provocations. *There shall not be found amongst you any one that useth Divination, or an Observer of Times, or an Inchanter, or a Witch, or a Charmer, or a Consulter with familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer; for all that do these things are an Abomination unto the Lord: and because of these Abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. For these Nations, which thou shalt possess, hearken'd unto Observers of Times, and unto Diviners.*

A Second sort of those Diabolical Sins, which may be more particularly styled the Works of the Devil, are those, which Exprest more of the very Natural Temper and Disposition of Satan, than others: And such are Pride, Envy, and Malice. That Pride is the very Temper of Satan, may be gather'd from 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. He was Tempted by that Glorious Condition, in which he was Created, to conceive highly of his own Dignity, and Greatness, and Merits; and to have towering and ambitious Thoughts of Usurping to himself a greater Power, and larger Province, perhaps, than God had given him; and for this his Pride (and his Rebellion the Effect of it) he was cast out of Heaven, and Excluded the Blessed Mansions of the *Poor in Spirit, whose is the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Matth.* 5. 3. And it does therefore concern every One of you, to take care of harbouring in your Breasts the least Degrees of Pride and Vanity, and of being Exalted in your own Minds, upon the account of any thing, you Enjoy above others, whether a more flourishing Condition in the World, or greater Success in your Affairs, or upon the account of your greater Skill and Knowledge, *Lest, being lifted up with Pride, you fall into the Condemnation of the Devil*, as it is in the now cited Place of *Timothy*. And indeed *Pride*, in whatever ways it shews it self, ought most carefully to be Subdu'd and Mortify'd, as a Sin most truly *Diabolical*; for it is to be consider'd, That tho' the Devil be the first Author of all Sin, and instigates to every Kind, yet there are many, which Satan himself cannot commit: As for Instance, He cannot be Drunk, nor commit Lewdness, and the like, himself, because these are committed only in, and by the Body, whereas he is a Spirit; but yet he is Naturally Proud and Ambitious: And therefore, tho' those other, as being more visible and sensible, are more Scandalous in the Eyes of Men; yet this more Spiritual Wickedness, Pride and Ambition, and a Pharasaical Censoriousness, and Thinking more Highly of One-self, and more Disrespectfully of Others, than is meet, are more truly *Diabolical*, and have more in their Nature of the Devil's Temper.

And as Pride, so Envy is another of the Devils Qualities. The Devil, through his Pride and Rebellion, having lost that high Station and Dignity, he once enjoy'd in Heaven; and seeing Man exalted to a Capacity of obtaining a Share in that Glory and Happiness, from which he is excluded: He is possess'd with the utmost Envy both towards God and Man; Envyng God the Service of us his Creatures, and us both the Happiness of serving so Good a Master,

II.

Such as express more of the Devil's Temper, than others, viz. Pride.

Envy.



and those infinite Rewards, which will be given us, for our faithful Service and Obedience to him.

*Malice.*

And from this his Envy proceeds that Rancourous *Malice* also, wherewith he is ever since Acted, so as to be continually Contriving how to do us the greatest Mischief; from whence he is called our *Adversary, the Devil*, 1 Per. 5. 8. Envy and Malice are indeed the very Natural Temper and Disposition of Satan; so that he seems to be wholly made up thereof. 'Twas Pride, as One said, made him Envious, his Envy, that made him Spiteful and Malicious, all which together make him a *Devil*. And therefore, as you would not appear to have something Diabolical in your very Natures, *Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from you with all Malice; and be Kind one to another, Forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's Sake, hath Forgiven you,* Eph. 4. 31, 32.

III.

Such as are  
more the pra-  
ctice of Sa-  
tan himself,  
than other  
Sins, viz.  
Murder.

Lastly, There are some Sins more the Devil's own Practice, than others, and do therefore deserve to be more particularly Styl'd the *Works of the Devil*: And there are these Three, *Apostacy, Murder, and Lying*, which are expressly mention'd as his own Sins, in that One remarkable Place of Scripture, *Joh. 8. 44. The Devil was a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no Truth in him: When he speaketh a Lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a Liar, and the Father of it. He was a Murderer from the beginning.* He delights in humane Gore; and no doubt the vast Slaughters of Men, which have been made in Bloody Wars, have been through the Instigation of Satan, stirring up Ambitious Princes unjustly to Invade their Neighbours Countries, that he might Glut his Appetite with Blood: And for the same Reason he Oblig'd the Pagans, his Worshipers, to offer Men in Sacrifice to him. And there is no Duel fought, but he is first at the making of the Challenge, and then at the Murderer's Elbow to direct the fatal Thrust. In these last sort of Murders, he hopes to do Two Works at once, to destroy both Body and Soul in one instant; and to be sure he will never fail being present, where he can, to all Intents and Purposes, so effectually do the work of a *Destroyer*, as he is styl'd, *Revel. 9. 11.*

*Apostacy.*

*He abode not in the Truth.* Hereby is denoted his *Apostacy*, and Falling off from God, and his Service; another of Satan's principal Works of Sin. And if any of you, who have given up your Names to Christ, to be his Disciples and Followers, should hereafter, instead of *Renouncing the World, the Flesh, and the Devil*, as you have solemnly Professed in your Baptism, give your Selves up to the Service of Satan, of Mammon, and of your filthy Lusts; why, you will be reckon'd amongst those, that are Apostates from God, and *are turned aside after Satan.* 1 Tim. 5. 15. Nay, and if you should fall off from the Truth (as it is here Profest in this Church, of which you are Members) to any *Heretical Doctrines*, you will Imitate Satan in his Apostacy, who abode not in the Truth.

*Lying, and especially Calumniating,*

*When he speaketh a Lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a Liar, and the Father of it.* A Lie was that whereby he deceiv'd and ruin'd Man at first; (*Ye shall not surely dye*, said Satan, *Gen. 3. 4.* So contrary

to what God himself had Threaten'd our First Parents, in case they should Eat of the forbidden Fruit): And it is by erroneous and false <sup>and Evil-</sup>Doctrines (which as Tares he sows in the Field of the Church) <sup>speaking.</sup> whereby he has undone so many Souls ever since. You must therefore Abhor a *Lye*, or Speaking that which you do not Know to be exactly agreeable to the Truth of Things, as you will not make your Selves *Children* of such a *Father, the Devil*. And especially you must beware of that sort of Lying, whereby you will most nearly Resemble him, and that is in Slandering and falsely Accusing of any One to the Ruine of his good Name. Satan is particularly Stigmatized in Scripture for this sort of Lying, and is therefore call'd *The Accuser*, or Slanderer, *of the Brethren, which accuseth them before God, Day and Night*, Rev. 12. 10. and it is observable, that 1 Tim. 3. 11. where Women are charged not to be *Slanderers*, nor false Accusers, the Word in the Original is *μη δαίμονες*, not to be Devils, which should be a Warning to them, as they would dread so Black a Character, to avoid Entertaining one another with Backbiting, and speaking Evil of their Neighbours; which yet I am afraid is the most usual Conversation, when that Sex do meet together. Indeed as the *pernicious Lye*, utter'd for the Hurt, or Disadvantage of our Neighbour, is the most truly *Diabolical*; So all sorts of Lying whatsoever renders such as are Notorious for it, Contemptible and Vile amongst Men, and Odious to God: as does sufficiently appear by the Place and Company, they are Rank'd with, Rev. 22. 15. *Without*, that is, Hell, *are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lye*; which should make you of all things in the World, my Dear Youth, to Beware of this Odious, Hellish Sin of Lying; and I do the more earnestly press you to Hate and Abhor it, because Youth are most apt to be Addicted to it. And so much for Sin, consider'd as a Work of the Devil. And now,

Secondly, We should proceed to consider that other great Work of Satan, his Tempting of us to Sin. But this, as it has been his great Employment ever since the Creation of Mankind, and will be so, as long as there are Men on Earth to be Tempted by him: And as his Methods of Temptation are very many, and very subtle, and it does infinitely concern us, *Lest Satan should get an Advantage of us, that we should not be Ignorant of his Devices*: For these Reasons, I do think it may be profitable to you, if I make that great Work of his, his *Tempting us to Sin*, the Subject of some particular Discourses by themselves, in order to a more full and distinct State of that matter; as indeed it is very requisite you should be thoroughly Inform'd, if possible, of the Temptations of Satan, what they are. And therefore leaving that Part for the present, I shall proceed to finish this Lecture with shewing you,

Thirdly, What it is to *Renounce the Devil, and all his Works of Sin*, To Renounce, already spoken of, *and how necessary it is we should absolutely and entirely* <sup>all Word of va-</sup> *ly do so*. To Renounce, is a Word, that is apply'd in our Baptismal <sup>rious Import-</sup> Vow to several things, even all our Spiritual Enemies, that would <sup>ance, accord-</sup> draw us into Sin. *The Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity* <sup>ing to the</sup> *of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; they must all* <sup>Renounced.</sup>

of them be Renounced by us. And as the Word *Renounce* does carry in it a great deal of Meaning, and is of various Significations, according to the Nature of the things to be Renounced: So what it does particularly signify, with Reference to each of them, will best be understood by considering its Importance, as apply'd to every One of those things.

*To Renounce the Devil, in the sense of the Ancient Church, was to disclaim his Usurped Dominion & Authority over Mankind.* And agreeably therefore to the Explication now given of the Devil. *To Renounce the Devil*, is, no doubt, to Disclaim his Usurpt Dominion and Authority; or to leave off having any Communication, or Agreement with him, or having any Hand in his base and ungrateful Rebellion against God.

This was, no doubt, what the Primitive Church understood by Renouncing the Devil, (for they are Words of a very ancient Use in the Church of God.) The Devil, at the first Rise of Christianity especially, had obtain'd a Visible Kingdom, and that a Universal Monarchy, in a manner, over the World: Hence he is call'd, *The Prince of this World*, Joh. 14. 30. He had also his Temples, and his Altars, and his Sacrifices. *The things, which the Gentiles Sacrifice, they Sacrifice unto Devils, and not unto God*, 1 Cor. 10. 20. As also many lewd and bloody Plays, and pompous Processions were made in Honour of him, and he was therefore in Effect, *The God of this world*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. And now, when any were Converted from Paganism to Christianity, the Primitive Christians did expressly require, from all, that were Admitted into that *Kingdom of God, the Church of Christ*, a publick and open *Renunciation*, or Abjuration of him, or an utter Disowning and Abandoning the Devil's Authority; and the Paying any Homage, Service, or Obedience to him, by Worshiping of him, or his wicked Angels, or by going to those Plays and Processions Instituted in Honour of him. Thus does *Tertullian*, an ancient Father, inform us in his Book *De Corona*, wherein reciting the ancient Customs of the Church, he tells us, *That just before any were Baptized into the Christian Religion, they made a solemn Profession, both at their Entrance into the Water, as also a little before they had done, when under the Bishop's Hands, that they did Renounce the Devil, his wicked Angels, and Poms; that is, those solemn Processions of the Heathen Gods, and those Lewd and Cruel Plays, us'd amongst the Pagans, which were the Ceremonies of State, as it were, in Satan's Kingdom. All subjection to the Devil, and all usage of those Rights of his Kingdom, they did utterly abandon and forsake. And this was what was meant in the Primitive Times by Renouncing of the Devil.*

Aquam adituri, ibidem, sed aliquanto prius in Ecclesia, suo Antistitis manu contestamur nos Renuntiare Diabolo, & Pomis, & Angelis ejus. Tertul. de Corona.

*To Renounce his Works of Sin*, must accordingly signify in their Sense, to disclaim, abandon, or forsake every Sin, as being the proper Service of the Devil; and in the real Meaning of it, no less than a throwing off God's Authority, and a disowning his Power. For if you will read over *Rom. 1.* you will find, that People upon their forsaking of the True God, to serve other Gods, (which were many of 'em at least, no other than Devils) did thereupon fall into all manner of Sin and Wickedness, as you will see largely describ'd in that Chapter. And if you will also look into the Sixth Chapter to the *Romans*, ver. 11. you will see, that Christians by being Baptized,



tized, *Were to reckon themselves to be dead unto Sin, but alive unto God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* So that in the Original, and firſt meaning of the Words, as to Renounce the Devil, was to abjure and diſclaim the Power and Dominion of Satan, and to leave off having any Communication, or Agreement with him, and any Hand in his baſe and ungrateful Rebellion againſt God; ſo to Renounce his Works of Sin, was to Diſclaim, Abandon, or Forſake all, and every Sin, as being the proper Service of the Devil; and in the real Meaning of it, no leſs than a throwing off God's Authority, and a diſ-owning of his Power. This, I ſay, was the firſt Meaning of the Words, in the firſt Ages of the Church.

Nor are they to be Interpreted in a much different Sence at this Day. For Satan has his Kingdom ſtill in the World, and the Laws of Sin, which are the Laws of that his Kingdom, are Obey'd by the greateſt Part of Mankind. The barbarous Nations amongſt the Pagans, do directly ſerve him at this Day; and it is many a Chriſtian's Lot, who is caſt amongſt 'em, to be forc'd, either to Join with 'em in ſuch Impious Service, or to ſuffer Death with Torments, for reſuſing. And even in the Chriſtian Pale, tho' his Power is much weaken'd here, ſince the Coming of our Saviour, to what it was before, yet ſtill, as Chriſt has his Church, ſo Satan has his Synagogue amongſt us; and too many there are, within the Limits of Chriſtendom, who do openly and avowedly Obey no other, than the Laws of his Kingdom. All your Atheiſts and Deiſts, who Blaſpheme God, and the Chriſtian Religion; and all your Profane Swearers and Curſers, whom you ſhall hear every Hour in the Day to Dare God, as it were, by their horrid Oaths and Imprecations to Damn 'em, that is, to ſend 'em to the Devil; and all thoſe, who reſort to Charmers, and Conjurers, and Fortune-tellers (as many Thouſands do in this Nation :) All theſe, I ſay, are the open and profeſt Subjects of Satan's Kingdom. And how many Lewd and Riotous Livers are there amongſt us, who do little elſe but the Works of the Devil, and Obey no other Laws, but thoſe of Sin? So that as you will Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, in that Sence, wherein the Church does at preſent underſtand the Words, you are with all poſſible care to avoid being of the Number of ſuch Men.

And I know no more that need be ſaid at preſent, to explain the Importance of the words, *Renounce the Devil, and all his Works*, except it be this; That if we conſider ſuch a Renunciation, as the Act of One, who has been heretofore a Slave to Satan, and a Servant to Sin, then it ſignifies to Forſake and Abandon the Service of Sin and the Devil, formerly Liv'd in; and ſo being a Ceasing to do Evil, and a Learning to do well, is the ſame with Repentance. But if it be the Act of one of thoſe, who may be ſaid to need no Repentance, of which ſort are Infants, who have never committed Actual Sin, then to Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, does mean a firm Reſolution, never to ſide with him in his Rebellion againſt God; and as carefully as he can, to avoid the committing of any Sin, as being that, whereby God's Rightful Authority is caſt off, and the Devil's Uſurpt Dominion ſubmitted to. And ſo much for the Meaning of Renouncing the Devil, and all his Works.

*The Devil,* And now Lastly it remains, that I should shew you, how that it and all his is necessary, we should *Absolutely and Entirely* Renounce the Devil, works of Sin and all his Works. As to those other Enemies to our Souls, the must be abso- World, and our own Flesh, there is some Temper to be us'd, being lutely and en- neither of 'em are Absolutely, and in themselves Evil, but only by tirely Renoun- accident, when the World is too intensely Belov'd, and our Flesh ced, because, too much Indulg'd, to the Prejudice and Hurt of the Soul; and there-

fore there are some Degrees of Affection and Regard allow'd to both them. But the Devil is *the Evil One*, and he is by way of Eminence and Singularity styl'd, *the wicked One*, in the Holy Scripture, as *Matth. 13. 19.* and *1 Joh. 2. 13. 19.* So that there's not the least thing but E- Good, and nothing but Evil, proceeds from him; and therefore no vil proceeds manner of Agreement is to be made with him; *What Concord hath from Satan. Christ with Belial,* 2 Cor. 6. 15. Nor are we to imagine we can divide our Service betwixt God and him; *We cannot serve God and Mammon,* Matth. 6. 24. So that the Devil is *Absolutely and Entirely* to be Renounced by us.

*And Sin,* And so likewise must his Works of Sin. Sin as Sin, is entirely Evil: whether we Consider it in its Original Cause and Nature, and consider it in its Effects and Consequents, and there is not a worse Evil in the World than Sin: View it in its Original and first Cause, and it is a Brat of the Devil's, the First-born of Hell. And view it again in its Cause & Na- Nature; or in its sad Effects, and Consequents, is the utmost Evil. And so likewise must his Works of Sin. Sin as Sin, is entirely Evil: Consider it in its Original Cause and Nature, and consider it in its Effects and Consequents, and there is not a worse Evil in the World than Sin: View it in its Original and first Cause, and it is a Brat of the Devil's, the First-born of Hell. And view it again in its Cause & Nature; or in its sad Effects, and Consequents, is the utmost Evil. And then consider it next in its sad Effects and Consequents, and there is no Evil in the World to be compar'd to it. "It is a Sin, says One, which turn'd glorious Angels into hideous Devils, and "tumbl'd them down from Heaven, to Hell: It is Sin, that fill'd the "World with Woes and Plagues, brought Death and Diseases, "and a vast and endless Summ of Miseries into it. It is Sin, that "torments and terrifies the Conscience, that kindles Hell Flames, "Exposes the Soul to the eternal and direful Revenges of the "Great God: And in a word, Sin is so perfectly and only Evil, "that the worst of things here, were they free from the Con- tagion and Evil of Sin, would be Excellent and Amiable. So that Sin also is *Absolutely and Entirely* to be Renounced by us; and there is no one Sin, nothing in the least of Sin, that may willingly be comply'd with.

*Therefore no* I say, *No One Sin, nor any the least of Sin,* for so Poisonous a thing it is in spoiling of every thing, that is Good in Man, that if we shall *one Sin, nor* allow our selves but in One single Sin, it will utterly spoil all our *any thing the* other Righteousness. *If a man keep the whole Law, and yet offend* in one Point, he is guilty of all, Jam. 2. 10. And one such single *least of Sin,* Allowance will stop God's Ears against all our Prayers: *If I regard* *Iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me,* Psal. 66. 18. Nay, so *must willing-* absolutely an Evil is Sin, and so *Absolutely and Entirely* it is to be *ly be comply'd* Renounced by us, that the least sinful Action is not to be committed *with.* in order to attain the greatest Good. So little a Sin, as an *Officious Lie*, must not be told, no not to save a Man's Life: Nor a *Pious Fraud*, nor a *Holy Cheat* committed to promote the Good of the Church, and to secure and propagate what we take to be the True Re-

Religion: For if the Truth of God hath more Abounded through my Lie unto his Glory; why yet am I judg'd as a Sinner? Whereas he who telleth such a Kind and Serviceable Lie, will certainly be Judg'd as such; and as it follows, *Whosoever shall say, Let us do Evil that Good may come of it, his Damnation is just*, Rom. 3. 7, 8. So that every Christian must *Absolutely and Entirely Renounce the Devil, and all his Works of Sin.*

And indeed it is but to consider, as well as know the Nature of Satan, and of Sin, and the horrid Consequence of yielding to either of them; and it is impossible any should not absolutely and entirely Renounce, that is, utterly detest, and avoid, and beware of them. As for the Devil, why? Even the Perverst of People, the Israelites, when it was solemnly put to their Reason and Consideration, who to serve, God, or the Devil, could not without the utmost Detestation think of the latter. *If it seems Evil unto you, says Joshua to them, Josh. 24. 15, 16. to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land ye dwell, (and those Gods were no other than Devils) but as for me, and my house, said he, we will serve the Lord.* And the Result was, *That the people answered and said, God forbid, that we should forsake the Lord to serve other Gods.* God forbid: The very thoughts of such a Thing, when they came to consider it, was Odious to them.

And if we did but consider the odious Nature of Sin, we should not more Abhor the Devil himself, than Abandon every Sin: For why? *He that committeth Sin is of the Devil*, we are told, 1 Joh. 3. 8. Such a One is of the Devil's Party, he is a sharer in the Devil's Rebellion against God, and in his wicked Designs to destroy God's Authority: And tho' he be not a Devil himself, yet he is near a-kin to him, and shall Partake with him, as in his Rebellion, so in his Punishment: And who, that considers this, can stick Entirely to abandon and to abhor so foul a thing as Sin is.

But however, whether People will consider it or no, so necessary it is, that every Christian should absolutely and entirely Renounce the Devil, and all his Works of Sin; that this if you do not do, you will forfeit all your Right and Title to those infinite Blessings, held forth to you in the Covenant of Grace, and Purchas'd for you by the Blood of Christ. If you do not utterly Renounce the Devil, by having nothing to do with him, in his foul Rebellion against God, you will be accounted no Members of Christ's Church, but of the Synagogue of Satan, as the Apostatizing Gnosticks, those great Enemies of God are call'd, Rev. 2. 9. and that for their Halting betwixt God and Satan. And except you do also utterly Renounce his Works of Sin, by abandoning every known Sin, as that, whereby the Divine Authority is thrown aside, and his Power dis-own'd, you will be so far from being the Children of God, that you will be styl'd no better than Children of the Devil: For *whosoever is Born of God, doth not commit Sin*, it is said, 1 Joh. 3. 9. that is, does keep himself strictly from all deliberate Sin: *And in this the Children of God are manifested, and the Children of the Devil; whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God*, as the same Apostle goes on, ver. 10. And who else is it, think ye, but he, who Overcometh both the Devil,



and all his Works of Sin, that shall ever *Inherit the Kingdom of Heaven* ? Why he, and none else, shall Inherit so inestimable a Blessing, we are assur'd, *Rev. 21. 7, 8. He that Overcometh shall Inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son: But the Fearful and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars shall have their part in the Lake, that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the Second Death.* So necessary upon these several Accounts it is, that, according as has been Explain'd, you should *Renounce*, that is, *Disclaim, Abhor and Abandon the Devil, and all his Works of Sin:* Which that you may all of you do, God Almighty grant of his infinite Mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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THE

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T H E

# Tenth Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works.**

**I** Have already shew'd you, First, who the Devil is, and Secondly in Part, what are his Works. All *Sin* whatsoever, I have shew'd you, is a *Work of the Devil*; but there are some particular Sins, which being more directly level'd against God's Authority, and expressing more of the natural Temper and Disposition of Satan, and being more his own Practice, than others, do more particularly deserve the Title and Character of the *Works of the Devil*; and what they are I have shew'd you.

Secondly, *And as Sin, so his Tempting of us to Sin is another main and principal Work of the Devil.* And I have reserv'd this Subject of Satan's Temptations, to be particularly handled in some set Discourses by themselves, that so I might have more room to Expose 'em to you; there being no subject in Practical Divinity of greater Consequence and Concernment to our Souls, than to be thoroughly Informed in the Ways and Methods of Satan's Temptations.

*Now to Tempt one, in the general Notion of the Word, does barely To Tempt, is signify to make Tryal of a Person, either by Words, or Signs, by Promises, to make a or Threats, whether or no he will do such a thing.* And the Tempting Tryal of a of a Person may be Morally Good, or Evil, according to the End, for Person. which such a Tryal is made. If the Tryal be of a Person's *Vertue*, To Tempt, is only that Occasion may be afforded him to give an Experiment and thing morally Proof thereof: that so if he do well, he may be Rewarded; if Ill, Good or Evil, that his *Hypocrisy*, and the Corruption of his Heart may be discovered, according to the End thereof. and he himself Humbled with the Sight and Sence thereof to his Amendment. There is nothing may hinder a Governour especially, thus to Tempt any one; and therefore to Tempt a Man to this End, To Tempt a may very well consist with the Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness of Person, in order to prove his Vertue, or God. And accordingly we find in Scripture Two Eminent Instances of God's Tempting Persons to both these Purposes.

And First we find, *That God Tempted Abraham to try his Faith, discover his and to Reward him for it.* And he did it to as high a degree, as was Corruption, ever heard of, bidding him to *Take his Son, his only Son Isaac, whom consistent with he loved, and to get him into the Land of Moriah, and to offer him there the Justice, Wisdom, and for a Burnt Offering, Gen. 22. 12.* The Tryal was severe enough; Goodness of a but God did put *Abraham* upon it with no other design, but that he Governour; might have occasion given him to exercise his Faith in God. And thus God

does Tempt Men. I. Thus he Tempted Abraham to try his Faith, & to Reward him for it. by giving such a Noble Demonstration thereof, as to Resign up his own Son to be Sacrificed at God's Command, and with his own Hands too, he might thereby Testify both to God and Man, how much he Trusted in his Maker; and thereupon might obtain the Honour upon Earth, to be accounted the Father of the Faithful, among all Generations of Men; and in Heaven, to be the Highest in the Ranks of all Humane Inhabitants, it being the Priviledge of the greatest Saints to be Lodg'd in *Abraham's Bosom*. And to the same Gracious Purposes it is, that he does Tempt his Faithful Servants, when at any time he lets loose the Enemy of the Church upon 'em, to persecute and destroy 'em: It is to the Intent, that giving an extraordinary Proof of their Faith, and Constancy, and Patience, and Love to him, he may extraordinarily Reward 'em. *Every one that hath forsaken Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for his Names sake, being certain to receive an Hundred Fold, and to Inherit everlasting Life,* Matth. 19. 29.

II. Secondly, We find, That God Tempted Hezekiah, in order to discover to him his own Hypocrisy and Corruption, and the Pride of his own Heart, that he might be humbled in the Sight and Sense thereof. For Hezekiah being lately Recover'd from a mortal Sickness, by the miraculous Providence of God: *The Princes of Babylon sent their Ambassadors unto him to enquire of the Wonder, that was done in the Land, and God left him to try him, that he might Know all that was in his Heart,* 2 Chron. 32. 31. that is, God did Providentially order the Coming of those Forreign Ambassadors upon this Errand, to try Hezekiah, whether he would take this occasion before those Idolaters, who put their Trust in those, which were no Gods, to Glorify the True God of *Israel*, for so miraculously Recovering of him. But he being more Intent upon setting out his own Grandeur, than God's Glory, took care only To shew them all the House of his precious Things, the Silver, and the Gold, and the Spices, and the precious Ointment, and all the house of his Armour, and all the house of his Treasures, 2 Kings 20. 13. Upon which God did severely Reprove and Humble him by the Mouth of his Prophet *Isaiah*, ver. 17, 18, 19. for such his Ingratitude, Pride, and Vanity. And so it is with every One of us. There is a great deal of *Pride*, and *Vanity*, and other *Corruptions* and *secret Hypocrisies*, which ly lurking in our Hearts; and we our selves are Ignorant thereof, and how we shall prove till we are try'd, and some Providential Occasion draws it out: And then if God's Word, or Ministers, or the Rebukes of our own Consciences make us sensible thereof, we are much Better'd, and God has his Gracious Ends in our Amendment. So that thus you see to what gracious Ends God does Tempt us; namely, Either to prove our Vertue, that he may Reward us the better for it, or to discover our Hypocrisy and Insincerity, that we might be Humbled in the Sight and Sense thereof, and be thereby amended.

These Temptations of God Renounce. And these therefore are such Temptations, as we are in no Sense to Renounce. But indeed *We have reason to count it all Joy, when we fall into these divers Temptations of God's ordering, Knowing this, that the Trying of our Faith worketh Patience,* Jam. 1. 2, 3. They give us an Opportunity of Exercising the Noblest Vertues of Christianity, Faith,



Faith, and Patience, and such exalted Strains, and glorious Heights of Religion, as cannot be Exercised but in a State of Temptation and Tryal: and consequently they give us an Opportunity of Treasuring up to our selves the greatest Rewards in Heaven, which we shall be sure to Obtain, if we come off clearly and innocently from under Temptation; it being declared, *Jam. 1. 12. that Blessed is the Man, that endureth Temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to those, that love him.*

Or if they are Tryals for the Discovery of our Corruptions, they prick the Bladder of *Vanity*, let out the Corruption, and we become better, and sounder for it ever after. These Tryals of us are not made by God for his own better Satisfaction and Knowledge of us, for he is the *Searcher of the Hearts*, and the *Tryer of the Reins*, and *Knows what is in Man*: But for our own *Conviction*, and the Discovery of us and our own Sinfulness, to our selves, than which Knowledge nothing certainly can be more useful to us. To such gracious Ends you see are God's Temptations, which are not therefore in any sense to be Renounc'd by us. Well, But

Secondly, There is quite a different End in some sort of Temptations, and *They are meerly to Enforce or Ensnare a Person into some Sin, that so God's Anger may be Kindled against him, and the Person may be punished for his Transgression*; and in this Sense *Let no Man say when he is Tempted, I am Tempted of God, for God cannot be Tempted with Evil, neither Tempteth he any Man, Jam. 1. 13.* No, the Temptations that are made to this End, do arise from other Authors than God; either from our own Lusts, and so it follows, *ver. 14. Every Man is Tempted, when he is drawn aside of his own Lusts, and Enticed,* *Jam. 1. 14.* Or from the World, particularly from wicked Persons in it: And thus the *whorish Woman* Tempted the *young Fool*, *Prov. 7. 18.* Or chiefly and originally from Satan: Hence in many Places of the Scripture, particularly *Matth. 4. 3.* and *1 Thes. 3. 5.* he is styl'd the *Tempter*; and from his unwearied Diligence in Tempting us, he is said to be continually walking about seeking whom he may Devour. He is here by way of Eminence call'd the *Tempter*, because he is the Chief of all those Enemies of ours, which would withdraw us into Sin. He is the grand Engineer, that puts the World, and the Flesh on work, that does Order and Appoint which way they shall Batter us, and does Direct and Manage their several Temptations.

And now, as it does infinitely concern you to Know his Temptations, and in what Ways and Methods he usually Tempts Men, *Left Satan should get an Advantage over you*: So by the Help of God, I will discover to you his manifold Policies and Wiles; for tho' he be himself a Spirit, and his ways also are not always visible to mortal Eyes; yet through the Discoveries, that God has made to us in his Holy Scripture, *we are not Ignorant of his Devices, 2 Cor. 2. 11.* And I do think they may all of them, in a manner, be Reduc'd to these Four Heads.

First, *Such whereby he Attempted the whole Race of Mankind, to draw it off from Obedience to God, to do Service to him.*

Secondly, *Such as he levels against the Church of Christ, the true Servants of God, either utterly to destroy it from off the Face of the Earth, or at least-wise to Corrupt its Notions of God and Religion, so that by our very Religion we might Dishonour him.*

Third-

*but to be Re-joyced in, because for our Good;*

*A Temptation to Ensnare a Person into some Sin, that so God's Anger may be Kindled against him.*

*The vast contention it is to us, to know his Temptations.*

*The several Heads of Satan's Temptations.*

Thirdly, *Such whereby he Attempts to Overthrow Men of greater Eminency, on the account of their Station, Order, or Piety, upon whose Fall many Others are likely to Revolt over to him.*

And Lastly, *Such whereby he Applies himself to any Persons indifferently, to draw them into Sin.*

All these his Methods of Temptation I shall consider severally and distinctly, and shall discover 'em to you, that you may avoid the Force of 'em. And I shall confine my self mostly to such Discoveries, as the Scripture does give us: There being no other certain way of distinguishing Satan's Temptations, from those, which arise from other Principles, but by Revelation only.

And First, *Let us Consider his first and more general Temptations; those whereby he Attempted the whole Race of Mankind, to draw it off Tempted our first Parents, and still does continue to Tempt us.*

No sooner did God Create Mankind, but this Inveterate Enemy to the Divine Authority, had the Boldness to Attempt the drawing off from their Allegiance the whole Race of Men, to join with him in his wicked Rebellion against their Maker. This he did in Corrupting our First Parents; Knowing, that if the Fountain were Poison'd, all the Streams that Issue thence, must needs run muddy and defiled, as it accordingly happen'd: For *By that One Man Sin Enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have Sinned,* Rom. 5. 12.

And the Means whereby he Attempted the Universal Rebellion of Mankind, were

I. First, *By Insinuating into the Minds of Adam and Eve false Notions of God, and an ill and mean Opinion of their Maker and Governour.* This is the Method of all great Traytors, who Head a Party against their Prince, either to create unreasonable Jealousies and Fears, or undue Thoughts concerning him, especially concerning the Proceedings of his Justice and Mercy, in the Minds of his Subjects. And this Policy, as Satan does Inspire 'em with: So he Practiced it himself to the Destruction of Mankind. *Yea, and hath God said, says he slyly to the Woman, Te shall not Eat of every Tree of the Garden? Gen. 3. 1.* This is a most cruel Piece of Tyranny and Oppression, to lay before a Man Objects that are grateful and pleasing to his Appetites and Senses, and then to forbid him the Use of 'em. And what, tho' you may Eat of all the Trees but One, why not of every Tree? Why should a Man's Appetites be restrain'd from any Thing that is delightful in this World? But however you need not be afraid, for tho' God does deal so hardly with you, as to deny you those proper Enjoyments you might take; yet it cannot be, that he will destroy you for your Disobedience in so reasonable a case. He will be more favourable to you in the End, however he threatens you now. What, *Of the Fruit of the Tree which is in the midst of the Garden, hath God said, ye shall not Eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye dye?* And the subtle Serpent said unto the Woman, *Te shall not surely dye.* It cannot be, but he must be more Favourable to you than so; he may Threaten you to Frighten you, *But ye shall not surely dye.* And by this very Method of Satan's Infusing; by our Entertaining false Notions of God's Justice and Mercy; of his Justice, as if he commanded us unreasonable Things, and

And by Entertaining false No-

and laid greivous Restraints upon our Lusts and Appetites; and by conceiving unduly of his Mercy, as if notwithstanding the severity of his Threatnings, he would in time Relent, and like an Easy and Fickle-minded, Man Reverse his own Judgment and Decrees against sinners: By these ill Notions, I say, of God's Justice and Mercy, do the general Part of Mankind, to this Day, Encourage themselves in sinning against their God, and in Rebelling against his Authority. This is One of the more General Policies of Satan, whereby he did at first, and does still endeavour to draw all Mankind, to venture upon a Revolt from God.

But all such Conceits of this Kind do at any time enter into your Hearts, you are to Renounce and Abhor, and immediately to cast them out of your Thoughts, as the undoubted Suggestions of Satan, on purpose to take off your Fears, and to lull your Souls into a most dangerous security in a Course of Sin. No sure, the Laws of God, which he has given us, you must consider, are most Just and Reasonable in themselves; and yet farther to Encourage us to Obey 'em in the most difficult Cases, he has Propounded infinite Rewards in Heaven to those, who shall persevere to the End in well-doing; but on the contrary, to discourage Disobedience, he does Threaten as infinite and eternal Punishments in Hell, to all licentious and wicked Living. And as he will not fail of Bestowing the former, so there is no reason in the World to fancy he will forbear to Inflict the latter. It was not without the highest Reason, and perhaps because nothing less than Eternal Punishments are sufficient to restrain Sinners from those Pleasures of Sin, which are present, that he did Threaten to Inflict such at first. And when Laws so Reasonable in themselves, and whose Obedience, neither the Goodness of the Lawgiver, in so bountifully Rewarding, nor the fear of his Power in so terribly Punishing, can secure, are basely Transgressed, and Trampled upon by base and ungrateful Rebels against the Majesty of Heaven: what reason is there any Sinner should promise himself, That God will not Punish the Transgression of 'em to as high a Degree, as in his Word he has Threaten'd? And for any Man therefore without any Ground at all, but his own fond Wishes and Desires, he might not be so Punish'd, to to Promise himself, That God will after all forbear him, is such a desperate Peice of Madness, as can never enter into the Hearts of any, but those, whom Satan has Infatuated and Befool'd to their Ruine and Destruction. Wherefore you must take care, that you utterly cast out of your Souls the very first Motions of such Thoughts, looking upon 'em as no other, than Suggestions from Satan, whenever they enter into your Minds: And in so doing you will Renounce, as it highly Concerns you, that First and most dangerous Temptation of Satan.

Secondly, The next of these more general Policies of Satan, whereby he did at first, and does still endeavour to draw all Mankind to venture upon a Revolt from God; was his corrupting the Reason and Understanding of Man, by putting him upon curious Enquiries, into vain and unprofitable Things; and by inciting him to make an Experiment what was in Sin, in order as he pretended, to enlarge his Knowledge: But in reallity with a design to draw over his Soul a thick Cloud of Ignorance, that so he might lead him blindfold into

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II.

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into any Sin and Misery. *In the day ye shall eat thereof*, says the Serpent, *then your Eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil*, Gen. 3. 5. that is, to confine your Knowledge to the narrow subject of God's Laws, and to study only to know how you may please your Maker, is an Injury to that Noble Faculty, your Understanding, whereby you may be Equal with God himself, if you please; and therefore that nothing may escape your Knowledge, that you may understand all that, which is Good for Man, try the Experiment of knowing Things forbidden, as well as allow'd. And this indeed was a most exquisite and refin'd piece of Policy, such as Hell it self could not invent a more effectual One to ruine Man withal; and yet One whose Mischief was less discernible. A hungry Stomach does not more eagerly crave Meat, than the Mind of Man does naturally desire Knowledge, which is Food to the Intellectual Part, as Meat is to the Bodily. And if it be Useful and Good, it adds Nourishment, and Strength, and Vigour to the Inward Man, as wholesome Diet does to the Outward.

And now behold here the deep Policy of Satan, that when the Reasonable Soul of *Adam* did hunger and thirst so eagerly after Knowledge; and when possibly he thought it might make him able to steer his Way towards Happiness with greater certainty and safety, if he should once *Experimentally know Evil*, as well as Good, (as we commonly know a Way the better ever afterwards, which we have once mist) Satan by Tempting him to commit Evil, instead of Enlightning his Mind, did thereby quite extinguish the Candle of the Lord in the Soul of Man, Divine Knowledge: so that instead of discerning his Way to Heaven, thenceforward he was not able so much as to guess at it. For why? Sin like Mud, does strangely foul and defile the Soul. It stirs up the Lusts and Appetites within a Man, and these rising upwards, do wonderfully cloud and muddy a Man's Reason. Sin does even turn a Man Top-sy-turvy. It puts the Affections, Lusts and Appetites uppermost, and tumbles Reason and Judgment down; and therefore, Just as in a Vessel, which has a Sediment in the Bottom, but clear Liquor in the Top, if you turn it up, the Dregs mixing with the purer Part, makes that, which was clear as Chrystal before, become very foul and muddy: So in a Soul defil'd with Sin, Reason can no longer see where the Way of its Happiness does ly.

The Truth of it is: To spend too much of our Time, and of our Thoughts in gaining the Knowledge of Things, in themselves Lawful, as in the Laws of our Country, or in the Mysteries of Trade, will too much take a Man off from Enquiring into, and will hinder the Knowledge of God, and of our selves, and of the Means of being happy in Heaven, which does infinitely more concern us. Hence *Not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble were called*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. But if Men seek to Enlarge their Knowledge by Experimentally knowing of Sin, and with Solomon, *Give their Heart, as to know Wisdom, so to know Madnes and Folly*; they will not only soon perceive with him, *That it is but Vexation of Spirit*: but they will find it will extreemly stupify their Sense and Apprehension of spiritual Things. And being frequently and ha-  
bitually

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bitually committed, will cause in them such a Reprobate Mind, as will disable 'em at length to know any difference between Good and Evil.

And by this very Wile does he to this Day bring such an Ignorance in Religious Matters, as does apparently reign in the Minds of some Men. Some he engages in nice Enquiries after a Thousand other things, to draw 'em off from ever looking into their Bibles. And as to Others, by decoying 'em into one Sin after another, he does at length improve their Knowledge of Evil to that degree, that at last they come to know nothing of Good; nay, to have so little a sense of it, such stupify'd Apprehensions concerning it, as to Call Evil, Good; and Good, Evil.

*By these Means he brings that Ignorance in Divine Matters, which reigns in most Men's Minds.*

And then having once blindfolded the Reason of Man with the Ignorance of Divine Things, what Sin and Misery is there, That Satan does not most easily lead Men into? For why? Good and Useful Knowledge, such as the Knowledge of God and of our selves, and of our Duty to him, is the Eye of the Soul, whereby alone it can see its Way, and steer its Course safely towards Heaven: Whereas on the other side, Ignorance of God and Religion, is the same in the Mind, as Blindness in the Eye; and therefore as a Blind man may with the greatest Ease be drawn aside into Pits, and over Rocks to his Downfal and Destruction, and it is next to impossible he should ever get safe to his Journeys End: so an Ignorant Man in Religious Matters must needs be an easy Prey to Satan and False Deceivers, and he cannot possibly tell how to steer his Course safe towards Heaven, but must almost necessarily suffer Shipwreck of Body and Soul in Hell. So that this Policy of the Devil, in Corrupting the Understanding and Reason of Man, by putting him upon curious Enquiries, and a sinful Experiment, in order as he pretended, to enlarge his Knowledge, but in reality with a design to draw over his Soul a thick Cloud of Ignorance, that so he might lead him blindfold into any Sin and Misery, is a Depth of Satan that was, and still is most Fatal and Destructive to our Innocence, and to our Happiness.

*And being spiritually ignorant, Men are easily led into whatever Sin and Misery.*

And this therefore is another Wile of Satan's, which you must also carefully avoid. You must above all things Beware of ever making Experiments of the Pleasures of Sin, vainly deceiving your own Souls with the Expectations, that having once known what is in 'em, you will the more Abhor 'em for the future. Few of those, who do make such sinful Experiments do afterwards return to a sound, and sober Sense of things. Not that they find any reason to stick to those Courses, but because the ways of Sin are meer Mazes, which once Enter'd into, are hardly got out of; and because Sin often committed, does at length fear the Conscience, and drives away the Holy Spirit, and so the wretched Sinner becomes utterly Ignorant of God's Ways and Happiness therein. And in their Ignorance what Pits of Destruction are there, which Satan cannot draw them into. You must therefore, I say, above all things endeavour, as to Expel all Ignorance of Divine Things out of your Minds: so the great Causes thereof, of Satan's Contrivance, namely, Curiosity after vain and unprofitable Things, which will divert you from what does infinitely more concern you, viz. The good State of your Souls; and you must carefully beware

*This therefore another Wile of Satan's, which must be carefully avoided.*



of Experimentally knowing Sin, the Commission and Acquaintance with which, will draw a thick Cloud of Ignorance over your Minds, as has been spoke. And hereby you will also Renounce and Defeat another considerable Temptation and Wile of Satan's, to draw us into a Course of Sin.

## III.

*By Bribing the Affections with something nearest our Hearts, and rather than disoblige and lose which, we will commit anything that is Evil.* A Third of those First and more general Methods of Satan's Temptations, whereby he did in the Beginning, and does to this Day Inveigle the greatest Part of Mankind into many a sin, *Is by bribing their Affections with something that is nearest their Hearts, and rather than disoblige and lose which, they will commit anything that is Evil.* Thus he did Tempt Adam to partake of the forbidden Fruit, by the solicitations of his Wife Eve, Gen. 3. 4. 6. Adam must needs have Lov'd his Wife Eve above all Things, and even equally with himself, she being *Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh*, Gen. 2. 23. And Satan therefore if he could make sure to his Party such a Favourite, what might he not obtain of him? He knew it, and therefore he Tempted Eve first, and by her Importunity, gain'd the Consent of Adam, and so he also Transgressed.

*And by whatever we most place our Affections upon, does he still inveigle us to do what is Forbidden.*

And the same is also still his Method to Ruine us. If there be any thing, which we do particularly place our Affections upon, he will be sure to Inveigle us by the Perswasions of that to do the forbidden Thing. If Achan once begins to set his Heart upon the *Wedge of Gold, and the goodly Babylonish Garment*, then, tho' it be an *Accursed Thing*, he will put the Discovery of it to the Venture. If Gehazi once begin to hanker after the *Talent of Silver, and the Two Changes of Raiment*, that shall put him upon Lying and Cheating to obtain them; *And the love of Money is the root of all Evil*, we are told, 1 Tim. 6. 10. And the like may be said of any thing else, whatever is our Darling, shall be his Instrument to Tempt us. And therefore it does nearly concern us, as we will preserve our selves free from the Danger of Satan, and all his snares, to have a Jealous Eye upon what we do most love, that it do not Entice us into Sin by his Art in managing of it. And therefore does our Saviour Caution us in such unusual Terms against Loving too much our very nearest Relations, telling us, *That if any one come to have us bear him, and Hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be his Disciple*, Luk. 14. 26. that is, he would have us to take care, we bear that Indifferency of Affection towards even our nearest Relations, as to be able to Forsake them, and their Interests (which they and the World will count Hating of them) rather than God, and lose his Favour; for that otherwise, if we set our Hearts too much upon them, they will prove a dangerous Snare to us, and a *Man's greatest Enemies*, as to his real Injury and Hurt, *will be those of his own House and Family*, because he does most Love them. It is a very great Temptation to be too warmly Affected towards any thing on this side Heaven; Satan will be sure to Tempt us thereby, if he can, to *Set our Affections, not on things Above, but on things of the Earth*, so contrary to what we are commanded, Col. 3. 2. We must therefore cautiously Beware lest he Attack us on that side.

*Lastly, by exciting their* Fourthly, And Lastly, to compleat the Rebellion of Man from God, and to render the Apostacy of our First Parents such, as should Reflect



Reflect the greatest Dishonour upon our Maker, Satan did excite their Lusts and Appetites also, after the forbidden Fruit, by proposing the fairest Objects, and the most delicious Dainties to their Senses. *And when the Woman saw that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was pleasant to the Eye, she took of the Fruit thereof, and did Eat, and gave also unto her Husband with her, and he did Eat, Gen. 3. 6.* What could be more Dishonourable to God, than for Persons owing their Life and Being, and all that they Enjoy'd to God's Bounty; and living in the midst of Paradise, and having all manner of Earthly Comforts flowing in upon them, so little to Value God, and his Favours, as to Sacrifice all their Interest in him, for the poor Enjoyments of One forbidden Fruit? Was not this to Undervalue him to the lowest Degree? Why, this Satan did, by proposing to their Senses such Objects, as being exceedingly Delightful, and extremely Pleasant to Behold and Taste, might most easily prevail upon them, to Transgress their Maker's Laws in obtaining of them.

And by the very same methods does he prevail to this Day, upon the far greatest Part of Mankind to Rebel against God. He was so well assured of the Efficacy and Power of this Temptation, that he endeavour'd to Overthrow even our Blessed Saviour by it. *He takes him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and shewing him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, he saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me, Matth. 4. 8, 9.* But the Second Adam being God, as well as Man, could not be Foil'd, tho' the First was so easily taken with sensible Things. But it is not so Happy with the rest of Mankind, who being made up very much of Sense, so that nothing enters into our Souls, but through the Doors of our Senses, we are by nothing so generally prevail'd upon, as by outward Things, and such as please our Senses; and therefore the Devil does particularly apply himself to Tempt us this way. He presents Riches, Honours and Pleasures to our outward Senses, and dazles them with their Glory and Beauty, and by that would Tempt us to purchase them at the Price of our Innocence.

And indeed the far greatest part of Sinners are wrought upon to Rebel against God, and are made Slaves to Satan's Kingdom, by this last method of his, *In Tempting our Lusts and Appetites by Sensible and Outward Things.* They are but few in Comparison, (some only of finer Parts and clearer Intellectuals) that are Tempted to Offend God by a *Curiosity of Knowing every thing, tho' useless and sinful*: But the far greatest Part of Mankind are gross in their Understandings, and such Carnally-minded Men place their whole Happiness in the Enjoyment of such things, as gratify the Bodily Part of their Natures; and therefore by the Presentation of those things to their Senses, with all the Advantage that Satan has Skill enough to put 'em off withal, their Lusts and Appetites do wholly desire these things.

And as Satan does excite our Lusts and Appetites to covet Unlawful things, by whatever pleases any of our Senses; so especially by those Objects that do gratify the Senses of Seeing and Tasting: Hence as to the Lusts of the Eye, *How many look so long upon a Woman, till they have committed Adultery with her already in their Hearts?* And as

to our Appetites, How many Belly-Gods, with *Esau*, Sell their Inheritance for a Mess of Pottage?

But our being taken only with outward things, is such an high Ingratitude to God, who hath provided so much better for us, and such an Abuse to our own Souls, which are capable of relishing higher Enjoyments, as is not to be endured.

But our being taken only with sensible and outward Things, is such an high Ingratitude to God, and such an Abuse to our own Souls, as is not to be endur'd. What can shew more Ingratitude to God, than to despise those Noble Enjoyments, which he has prepared for purify'd Souls in Heaven; and to choose to feed upon the Husks of sensual Pleasures here below? And as to our own Souls, Why should such excellent Beings, of such exquisite Faculties, capable of relishing those Pure and Heavenly Joys above, be clogg'd and surfeited with those cloying Vanities of this World? Which after they are once Tasted, are sure to sit very Heavy, and are never well digested by the Mind and Conscience; and the Soul can never be at Ease, till by Confession and other Acts of Repentance, it has thrown 'em up again. But the Vileness of thus submitting the Mind to drudge to our Senses, and to study only to please our Lusts and Appetites, will be more properly Expos'd, when we come to shew you how far, and in what fence you are to Renounce the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

To sum up then what has been hitherto said concerning those Temptations, and Means whereby at first Satan overthrew the whole Race of Mankind; and drew it off from their Obedience to God, to do Service to him, and does still so successfully Overcome so many: Whether it be by infusing into your Thoughts ill Apprehensions of God, particularly of his Justice and Mercy; or by diverting of your Minds by needless Curiosities, from improving of your Souls in Divine Knowledge; and especially, as is his wont, by stupifying of your sense of Divine Things, by trying what is in sinful Pleasures: Or whether he shall at any time Tempt you to commit what is sinful, by the Inveiglements and Enticements of what you do entirely love and affect: Or Lastly, By proposing to your Lusts and Appetites, what is pleasing to your Senses. In which of these ways soever it is, that he attempts you, you must stoutly resist him. And being he was not successful in these ways of Temptation against our First Parents alone, but has been also Vers'd in the same for many Thousand Years ever since; and therefore must be suppos'd to have grown very skilful in the Management of 'em: It does therefore concern you, with more than ordinary Diligence to Guard your selves against 'em. And in so doing you will go a great way towards Renouncing that great Work of his, his Tempting us to Sin; concerning which, what is farther to be spoke, must be defer'd till the next Opportunity.

T H E

T H E

# Eleventh Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.**

**T**HAT Great Work of the Devil, his Tempting of us to Sin, being the Subject of our present Consideration; and in order to the full Discovery of what so much concerns you, having already shew'd you, First, *By what Temptations and Means he overthrew the whole Race of Mankind, and drew it off from Obedience to God, to do Service to him*: In pursuance of the same important Subject, concerning the Temptations of the Devil, what they are, and in what Ways and Methods he attempts our Ruine; I am

Secondly, *To discover to you, such as he Levels against the Church of Christ, the True Servants of God, either utterly to destroy them from off the face of the Earth; or at least-wise so to corrupt the Notions of God and Religion, that by their very Christianity they may dishonour him.*

Soon after that Satan had seduc'd the whole Race of Mankind into a most unnatural and ungrateful Rebellion against their Maker; did God of his infinite Compassion to the woful State of Man, in slavery to so base a Tyrant, as the Devil, appoint his own Son to be the Great Captain of our Salvation, and gave him Power and Commission to Lilt a Church Militant out of the rest of the World; who being directed by his Word, and assisted by his Holy Spirit, should continually fight under his Banner and Conduct, against this wicked Spirit, the Devil; and discharging their Parts well in this Warfare, should in another World be eternally Rewarded with Honour by him. But the Devil Enrag'd, as a Bear bereav'd of her Whelps, to have his Prey thus snatch'd away out of his Teeth, by One mightier than he, sets himself with the greatest Vigour to ruine this Body of Men, who are Arm'd by God, on purpose to destroy his Kingdom; and does therefore, both with the Fury of a Roaring Lion, and with the Cunning of a Subtle Serpent, continually attack it; endeavouring all he can, either utterly to Destroy the Church of Christ from off the Face of the Earth: Or at least-wise, so to corrupt its Notions of God and Religion, that by Religion it self it might dishonour him.

And his first and chief Endeavours were, utterly to destroy the Church of Christ from off the Face of the Earth; Towards the understanding of which, we must know, that God the Father gave Commission

*What Temptations Satan levels against the Church of Christ.*

*God recovers out of the Fallen Race of Mankind a Body of Men, the*

*Church, to his service, Lifting 'em under Jesus Christ to Fight against Satan.*

*The Devil Enrag'd to have his Prey snatch'd out of his Teeth, continually Attacks it.*

*His first and chief endeavours are utterly to destroy it from*



off the Face to his Son to raise this Church Militant, immediately after the Fall of the Earth. of Man; and the War between Satan and the Church was Proclaim'd in these Words, *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between her Seed and thy Seed; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel*, Gen. 3. 15. And no sooner was this War Proclaim'd, but this cruel Murderer, the Devil (for a Murderer he is said to have been from the Beginning) thought to have cut it off at one Blow in the Person of *Abel*, to slay whom he Instigated his own Brother *Cain*, that Cursed Servant of Hell. And tho' God, in the Person and Family of *Seth*, did recruit the Church of Christ; yet the Posterity of *Cain*, being a Barbarous and Bloody sort of Men, did so far prevail and bear down all before 'em, that the True Servants of God were reduc'd to the Number of Eight Persons, and were drove into a very narrow Corner, even into the Compaſs of the Ark. Thus he prevail'd over the Church of God, so as almost to Extinguish it before the Flood.

And when afterwards Recruited in the Family of *Seth*, yet he Reduc'd it again by the bloody Posterity of *Cain*, to Eight Persons in the days of *Noah*. Nor did his Fury burn less fiercely against it after: For when God giving a *Bill of Divorce* to all the Nations of the Earth, who the Flood, had so Vilely play'd the Harlot in serving of Idols, that is, Devils, God chose *Abraham* and his Posterity to be a *Special People unto himself*, above all the People that were upon the face of the Earth, Deut. 7. 6. Tho' One would have thought, that Satan might have been contented with such large spoils, as all the Kingdoms of the World besides; and that, as he had little reason to Envy the Maker of all Things, the faithful Allegiance of such a handful of Men, as were the People of the *Jews*, in comparison of the rest of the World: So he would let God alone with 'em. Yet so it was, that from the first Infancy of the Jewish Church (when by *Pharaoh* he endeavour'd utterly to have extinguisht that People, causing all their Male-Children to be slain by the Order of that Bloody Tyrant) till the time of our Saviour's coming into the Flesh; we find it to have been his continual Exercise, to stir up the Potentates of the Earth against

And in all it: And there is hardly a Period of Time to be found, but either Periods till he stir'd up the Neighbouring Nations, especially the Four Monarchies of the World, mention'd *Dan. 2.* to Molest, Harraſs, and coming, he stir'd up the Idolatrous Nations their Neighbours, our Saviour came amongst us, and that Christianity began to take Footing in the World; when, as God's Goodness to Mankind did most wonderfully appear in this their Deliverance; so did Satan's Envy and Fury burn so much the fiercer against both God, and Man. To his infinite sorrow he found himself dispossest of a great Part of Mankind, over which he had born before so absolute a sway. He saw his Altars thrown down, his Superstitious Myſteries derided, his Magical Arts discover'd, and the Kingdom of Light shining thro' his Kingdom of Darkneſs, and Expoſing it to the publick View and Scorn of the World; and this was a Hell to him, as bad, as that to which he is to be for ever Chain'd, and he call'd it a *Tormenting of him before his time*, Matth. 8. 29. No sooner therefore did God out of Pity to the whole Race of Man, whom he beheld holden in miserable Bondage to Satan, send his own Son To preach Deliverance

ance to the Captives, and recovering of sight to the Blind, to set at liberty them that are Bruised, to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord, as it is, Luk. 4. 18, 19. No sooner was Satan aware of this, but he endeavours to stifle the naked Infant of Christianity in the Cradle, as it were: And for the first Three Hundred Years we hear of nothing but of bloody Slaughters of poor Innocent Christians, who were hal'd to the Devil's Altars, and were Tempted, either to Blaspheme God and Christ, and to burn Incense to the Cursed Idol, or were most miserably Tortur'd, were tore Limb from Limb, thrown into Flames of Fire, expos'd to the Fury of wild Beasts, and forc'd to undergo the most study'd Torments, that the Devil, and cruel Men could invent.

So that for the first 300 Years we hear of nothing but of bloody Persecutions.

True it is, The Bloody-minded Emperors of Rome, and the Governors of Provinces were the immediate Instruments of inflicting those Sufferings upon the poor Christians, but the Devil it was that did Instigate, and set them on work; and accordingly throughout the Revelations we find the Warfare describ'd, as betwixt the Saints and the Dragon, (which in the Language of that Author, signifies the Devil,) so that he is to be lookt upon, as Chief in the Temptation.

The Emperors of Rome the Instruments, but Satan the Instigator.

And elsewhere to this Day, no sooner shall any Pious Persons, who are Zealous to propagate Christianity, enter into any Country in order to Convert it, by Preaching the Gospel unto them; but he immediately raises up his Militia against 'em, and by Instigating the Princes and People of those Countries to Persecute and Destroy 'em, he endeavours to beat 'em off from his Quarters: Insomuch that scarcely any Church has been yet planted in any Part of the World, but the Blood of Martyrs has been its Seed. Such has been ever, and is to this Day, the Violence of Satan, in Opposing and Hindring the Gospel from once Entering his Usurpt Dominions.

And wheresoever any Attempt is made to Convert a Country from Paganism, he does Instigate the Princes and People thereof, to Persecute & Destroy the Preachers of the Gospel.

Nor is he on the other side less Industrious, in driving Christianity out of those Countries, which it had once Possess'd; and that he has done with such great Success, that many Kingdoms, which were once Christian, are since Revolted, either to Paganism, or Idolatry again, or to another Religion of Satan's Invention, I mean Mahometism; insomuch, that if you divide the Earth into Thirty equal Parts, Paganism does at this Day possess Nineteen, Mahometism Six, whilst the Christian's Share is but Five Parts: as those, who are best skill'd in Geography and History do Inform us.

And he is no less Industrious to drive Christianity out of those Countries, whereof it had once possession.

And moreover, as a Politick Prince will above all Endeavour to Bribe to his Interests, a Party of Men within his Enemies Dominions, the more effectually to Promote his own Kingdom, and to Extend his Monarchy: In like manner has Satan, in all Ages of the Church, had his Anti-Christ in the very Bowels of Christendom; that is, a Succession of Hereticks, who Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof, 2 Tim. 3. 5. under the Name and Profession of Christians do sadly weaken Christ's, and most effectually Promote the Interests of Satan's Kingdom: And who have spilt more Blood perhaps in Establishing their Heresies, their Idolatries and Superstitions, than was ever done by Heathen Rome, and all the other Pagan Persecutions put together. So much you see it is the Endeavour of Satan, utterly to Destroy the Church of Christ from off the Face of the Earth.

And he has an Anti-Christian Party within the Bowels of Christendom, most sadly weakening Christ's, and most effectually promoting the Interests of his own Kingdom.

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And now the Question is, *What it is, and how far we are to Renounce the Devil, with respect to these his persecuting Temptations, and fiery Tryals.* And if it should be the good Pleasure of God, for Ends best known to himself, to let loose the Fury of the Dragon upon us, (as there is hardly any Age, from the very Foundations of Christianity, down to our present Times, in which he has not, and does not in some Part or other of the Church, exercise the Faith, and Patience of the Saints;) Why then our Part must be, after the Example of those, who have gone before us in the Fiery Tryal, to submit to the forest Sufferings, which Satan and his wicked Instruments can Inflict upon us, rather than deny Christ, or his Truths. Millions, I say, of Martyrs and Confessors have gone before us in this way of Renouncing the Devil, and his Persecuting Methods of Tempting: *And the time would fail me to tell, what Tryals they had of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea, moreover of Bonds and Imprisonments; how they were Stoned, were Sawn asunder, were Tempted, were Slain with the Sword; how they wander'd about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being Destitute, Afflicted, Tormented, Heb. 11. 36, 37.* And all this they suffer'd, rather than they would Deny the Faith, or in the least Comply with Idolatry, or Heresy, or with any Sin and Wickedness, to which Satan and his Instruments would have forc'd 'em. And so must we likewise, we must all of us in the same manner utterly *Renounce the Devil, and Resist unto Blood* his Tempting us to Heresy, or Sin, if call'd thereunto; our Blessed Saviour having made it the indispensable Condition of all his Followers so to do, *Matth. 16. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him Deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.*

And indeed those are the Happy men, who are Persecuted for their Adherence to Christ and true Religion, against Satan and his wicked Inventions. *Blessed are they which are Persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 5. 10.* There Persecution tends in the End, both to their own greater Reward, *Great is their Reward in Heaven, ver. 12.* And to the farther Increase and Propagation of Truth; when the Devil has done his worst, the True Church of Christ, like the *Palm-Tree*, being found to spread the wider for being Opprest. And therefore

II. Secondly, *When these Bloody Methods fail him, and instead of extinguishing Christianity, the Blood of the Martyrs proves the Seed of the Church; then with all the Art and close Contrivance possible, does he endeavour to Corrupt Men's Notions of God and Religion, so that by their very Christianity they may Dishonour him.*

The Dishonour of God, and the Debasing his Authority amongst Men, together with the Subjection of Man to himself, and the Ruine of our Souls, is the Thing he Aims at; and provided he compasses this End, he cares not by what Means it is, whether by Force or by Fraud: And accordingly he has his Titles given him in the Scripture from both, where he is call'd a *Lion* from his Fury, a *Serpent* from his Subtilty. And indeed, if by the former he *Has Slain his Thousands*, by these *He has Destroy'd his Ten Thousands*: So that of all his Methods to Ruine us, it does infinitely concern us, *That we be not Ignorant of these his Devices.*

Now



Lect. XI. Concerning the Temptations of the Devil. III

Now these Politick Methods of his, whereby he Endeavours To *These Politick Methods of his, discover'd to us under the Parable of a malicious Enemy, who coming privately in the Night, sows Tares where the Husbandmen had before sown good Seed. The Parable runs thus, Matth. 13. 24. The Kingdom of Heaven is liken'd unto a Man, which Sowed good Seed in his Field; but while Men slept, his Enemy came and sowed Tares among the Wheat, and went his way: But when the Blade was sprung up, and brought forth Fruit, then appeared the Tares also. And in the 37, 38, 39, ver. Our Saviour himself gives us this Explication of it. He that soweth the good Seed is the Son of Man; the Field is the World; the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom, that is, the Ministers of Religion, and their good Doctrine: The Tares are the Children of the wicked One, that is, Hereticks and their Evil Principles; The Enemy that sowed them is the Devil:* From which Parable and Explication of our Saviour's we may observe, That the most skilful Husbandman is not more curious about the Nature of his Seed, the Temper and Preparedness of the Soil, and the Fitness of the Season, and the Skillfulness of the Seeds-man, than Satan is choice and considerate about the Nature of his Erroneous Doctrines, the Preparation of Men's Minds to Receive 'em, about the most proper and seasonable Times of dispersing 'em, and the Capacity and Qualities of those his Agents, whom he Imloys to sow them in the Souls of Men.

And \* First, I do take it to be infinitely worth your while to consider, That those Heretical Principles and Opinions, which Satan does choose to Blend with Christianity, *Do generally bear some Resemblance of Divine Truths, in order to conceal their Discovery:* So that as the Tares, which the Enemy sowed, were not Distinguishable till the Wheat grew up, and bore Fruit: So the Heretical and Impious Doctrines of Satan's infusing, can scarcely be Known, but by their Fruits, to which way of Trying 'em our Saviour does therefore direct us.

And thus he does usually Gild over his Errors, with the Resemblance of Divine Truth, especially in those Churches and Countries, where the Light of the Gospel does most clearly shine. And I think I cannot do you better Service, than to Instance in some of those pernicious Errors, both in Faith and Practice, of this Kind, which do at present Infest this Church and Nation; that so you may be Caution'd against the Entertainment of them.

And First, It is usual with Satan here amongst us, *Under the plausible Appearance and Colour of Advancing God's Honour, in some of his Attributes, to render him Odious and Despis'd in other.* Thus for Instance, By infusing into Men's Hearts a Belief, that God has Created the far greatest Part of the World, on purpose to manifest his Dominion, and Power, and Justice, in Damning them afterwards for their Sins; he Robs him of the Honour of being a Gracious, Merciful and Good God, to the utter abolishing of all Vene-

\* First, As to the Nature of the Seed, he takes care his Heretical Opinions and Practices should bear some Resemblance of Divine Truth, in order to conceal their Discovery.

ration towards him, and Love of him: Infomuch, that the very Atheist, who denies there is a God, does not so much Affront him, (as even a sober Heathen thought) as those, who think so Dishonourably of him.

II. Secondly, *Under the Colour of Setting up, as the most precious Gospel Truths, some Opinions, that seem to have a great Resemblance of Truth, he brings in such Heresies into the Church, as do utterly undermine Religion, and the necessity of a good Life.* Thus by his Teaching, that Christ has so Paid the whole Debt for our Sins, that the vilest Wretch that Lives, need no more but be Perswaded, that he is an Elected Person; and that the Promises belong to him, on the Assurance of his particular Election; and that such a Faith as this will save him: By Vertue of such an Opinion (of Satan's infusing, no doubt) you shall too often find, an Envious Malicious Viper, a Covetous Worldling, a Rebel, and an Adulterer, even before his Sins are Repented of, talk of Recumbent, and Leaning upon Christ, and Relying upon the Promises (as they are pleas'd to Express it) with more Assurance than the best and holiest Livers, and the faithfullest Servants of Christ.

III. Thirdly, A most fatal and mischievous Delusion of Satan, rise amongst us in this Nation, at this Day, is his *Teaching Men to prefer some Eminent Christian Duty, or One Part of a Duty, or One way and manner of performing a Duty, to the Disparagement of another.* Thus you shall often see some careless, whether they come to Prayers or not, so they can be but at the Sermon; and others on the contrary, say, they care not whether they shall hear a Sermon in their Lives, so they can have but Prayers. But the most notorious Cheat he puts upon Men, is his infusing into their Hearts to *Prefer One Part of a Duty, to the utter Contempt of the Other.* Thus because in the Worship of God, in Prayers and Praises, to perform this with an hearty inward Devotion, is principally required; and we are commanded, that since *God is a Spirit, Christians must Worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* Hence vast Numbers of Men do conclude, that Outward Reverence, by Kneeling, lifting up the Eyes, and the like, is a meer Outward Ceremony, not at all necessary under the Gospel; infomuch, that God is now most highly Dishonour'd, even in our Publick Assemblies, where we come to do him Honour, by the shameful want of Reverence, appearing in most People, by Sitting at their very Prayers. So true it is what One said, "That such a rude and slovenly Kind of Religion, hath made its way into the World, by this Policy of Satan, and such a shameful Carelessness in Divine Worship; that should a Stranger to our Religion come into our Assemblies, he could not by the Carriage of the Generality of People imagine, what they were Doing; and that they were Worshiping of the Glorious Majesty of Heaven, would perhaps be One of the last Things he could Conjecture."

But the most fatal Error of this Kind, the most mischievous to the Church and Nation, and to Men's Souls therein, *Is the Preferring a way of performing a Duty, that is Unpracticable by the Generality of Christians, to the utter Disparagement of another more easy, and no less acceptable way of discharging it.* This is eminently seen in Advancing Extemporary Prayer, as the only Spiritual way of Worshiping,



ing, and in raising Prejudices in the Minds of Christians against *Forms of Prayer*, as not Spiritual enough, if at all Lawful. It is very certain, that the far greatest Part of Christians are utterly unable to *Conceive* for themselves, much less before others, such Prayers, or Praises, as are proper for their Occasions, and fit to be Offer'd in Decency and Honour to so Great and Wise a Majesty, as God is. And this consider'd, if Prayers of other Godly Men's; nay, of a whole Church's composing, must not be Us'd; does it not necessarily follow, that this Principal of all *Christian*, of all *Natural Duties*, must suffer, if not a total Neglect, at least-wise, that it must be very indecently and rudely Perform'd, and in too familiar a manner with God, as is too usual? Why, woful Experience does plainly shew us, that for this very Reason it does. And therefore, tho' no Church, through the Care of its Pious Bishops, and Pastors, did ever Abound with more excellent Forms and Helps, and those better fitted for *Publick*, *Family*, and *Private Devotion*, than our Church does at this Day; yet upon the account of Men's Prejudices, which they have been taught to Entertain against Forms of Prayer, as not Lawful, or not Expedient, or not Spiritual enough: Never did Persons so sadly Profane the Worship and Service of God, so heartlessly join in the *Common-Prayer*, so scandalously throw aside *Family Religion*, and so universally, I fear, neglect *Private Devotion*, as now they do. I fear, that those who so zealously decry Forms of Prayer, and that on purpose to Advance in its stead a more Spiritual way of Worship, as they think, will take it ill, that their darling Opinion should be Entitled to the Policy of so ill an Author; but, if considering the Mischief, together with the Cunning there does appear upon Examination, to be in Satan's Contrivances to Ruine Religion, and to draw us off from God; we may safely Conjecture any Doctrine, that is Pernicious in its Effects, when Plausible in its Appearance, to be of his Invention: surely that, which under the Colour of Advancing a more Spiritual Worship, does so fatally destroy all Religious Worship, has another Spirit for its Author, than is commonly Pretended.

By this latter Means, Satan has utterly Defeated those excellent Helps we have in our Church, and brought in a great Neglect of Publick, Family, and private Devotion.

And thus you may perceive, by these few Instances, whereby you may be enabled to make a happy Conjecture concerning the rest, how Cunningly Satan does Gild over, and Disguise his Errors with something of a Resemblance to Divine Truth, in order to prevent their Discovery: And this he does, especially in those Countries and Churches, where Men do *Thirst* after Divine Knowledge, and to that End do *Search the Scriptures*. The Devil's main and principal Care indeed, is to keep out the Word of God from shining upon any People; and at first he bends all his Forces to keep off the Preachers of it, that so the World being detain'd in Ignorance, they may not know how to Repent and Return to God: But when the Light of his Holy Gospel does once begin to shine upon any People, then all his Endeavours are to Corrupt and Deprave it with false and forc'd Explications, and to multiply Controversies and Contentions in Religious Matters, to teach Men to Scruple every Thing, and out of a scrupulous Humour to divide and sub-divide into innumerable Sects and Parties, stirring up each to Persecute and Destroy the other; that whilst the different Parties contend so furiously



with one another, he may securely Triumph over all, and bring the Holy Scriptures at last into Contempt with Prophane and Atheistical Men: As if they were the Occasion of all those Wars and Confusions, that are occasion'd in the World by Religious Disputes; when alas! He alone, by managing the Lusts and corrupt Humours of sinful Men, is the cause thereof. So St. Jude, ver. 19. *These be they who separate themselves, Sensual, having not the Spirit.* They have not the Holy Spirit of God, tho' none make more confident Boasts thereof, than Schismatics and Separatists usually do: But the Spirit, which they have, is the Spirit of Satan, and of Sensuality whatever Godliness and Purity above other Men they pretend to.

## II.

As to the Temper and Preparation of the Soil, in Churches where the Scriptures are lockt up, and Ignorance prevails, he imposes the grossest Heresies, as Articles of Faith.

Especially he introduces Idolatry and Superstition, whereby he is most immediately and directly serv'd.

But, Secondly, *Is the Soil better prepared to his Mind?* I mean, Is there no Prophecy, no Teaching? Are the Scriptures Lockt up in an unknown Tongue, and is a Cloud of Ignorance drawn over a whole Church? Why then he throws off the Veil, and walks as at Noon-day: And there is no Error and Heresy so gross, there is no Doctrine so contrary to Truth, that he will not Impose as an Article of their Belief. There is not that Ceremony so Absurd, Trifling, and Ridiculous, which he will not Introduce into such People's Worship: And there is no Immorality so bad in Practice, which he will not teach such People *securely*, and without Fear of Damnation to commit.

And I do call such Souls, who know not the Scriptures, and are utterly Ignorant of Divine Things, *a Soil better prepared to his Mind*; because he can, with the greatest Ease, reduce such back to his Ancient Paganism and Idolatry, or something like it, which above all things he desires; because by Superstition and Idolatry he is more directly and immediately serv'd. As a Politick Prince, he'll make great Advantages of the Divisions of another's Subjects: But the Idolater is his immediate Slave, and therefore an ignorant Soul, as being most proper to sow that Weed in, is the Soil he does most of all like. But he has a wonderful skill in suiting his Seed to any Soil, so that whatever People's Interests, or Lusts do incline 'em to Believe, he will never fail to suggest such plausible Arguments, as will most probably take with 'em.

## III.

As to the fitness of the Season, he is dexterous in Accommodating his Counsels, his Actions, and his manner of acting to such Seasons, as are most proper to his Purpose of seducing Mankind.

Nor, Thirdly, *Is Satan less Subtle in Distinguishing, which are the most fit and advantageous Seasons of sowing his Tares of corrupt Doctrines in the Field, or Church of Christ.* Indeed, his great Dexterity and Policy is eminently seen in suiting his Counsels, his Actions, and his manner of Acting, to such Seasons, as are most proper to his Purpose of Seducing Mankind. And tho' it be his constant and perpetual Endeavours, to Exercise his utmost Enmity against the Seed of the Woman, and to Establish his Kingdom amongst Men: Yet to fit his Counsels to proper Seasons, to suit 'em to the several Ages of the Church, to the Studies, and Dispositions, and Occupations of Men, that so he may commit no Blunder in his Politicks, is his great and mighty Care and Cunning. Of which, amongst other Instances that might be given, I will choose but One.

In the dark and ignorant Ages of the Church, which were from about the Ninth Century, till towards the Time of the Reformation, when Men's Studies and Dispositions favour'd wholly of *Superstition*; we hear of nothing so much in the Stories of those Times,

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as of the Apparitions and Visions, that the Founders of their several Orders, and superstitious Doctrines did receive: Infomuch, that no New Order of Monks and Fryars, nor any New Doctrine of Purgatory, Image-worship, Prayers to Saints, or any Pilgrimage to the Shrine of some Saint departed, was to be Invented; but either the *Virgin Mary*, or some other Saint, is said to have Appeared, and to have Appointed it. And as Legendary and Fabulous, as were the Histories of those Times, I am apt to Believe there were such Apparitions, as I am thoroughly perswaded, that *Samuel* did Appear to *Saul*: But then, as it was not really *Samuel* himself, for his Body was in the Grave, and his Soul in Paradise (and it was not in the Power of the *Witch of Endor*, to Raise up the One from the Dust, much less to Recal the Other out of Heaven;) but the Devil, who did assume *Samuel's* Shape: So it is more than probable, he might appear in the Resemblance of the Blessed Virgin, and Others, to seduce the superstitious People of those Times into Idolatrous Practices, who throwing aside the Scriptures, Gave heed to Fables and Doctrines of Devils. It was infinitely then the Interest of his Kingdom so to do.

Hence in dark and ignorant Ages, nothing so common as the Apparitions of Saints, as was pretended to introduce the belief of Purgatory, Image Worship, and the like Superstitions.

But pray Observe his different Policies at this Day. Now we live in a Learn'd and Inquisitive Age, wherein Men are naturally very suspicious, and not easy to Believe what they do not see. And therefore partly through such an incredulous Temper of Mind, and partly through a Spirit of Atheism and Sadducism now Reigning, many, like the Sadducees of Old, will Believe no Spirits. And therefore now we do very seldom hear of any Apparition, and the Atheist cannot obtain One, tho' he desires it, and would go many Miles to see One. The Reason is plain. Should the Devil appear to him, it would convince him there are those Invisible Powers, which now he denies; and therefore Satan, who is so Politick, will be as backward to appear now, as he was forward then: Because it is as much his Interest to detain Men in Atheism and Sadducism in this, as in Superstition in former Ages.

And in learned and philosophical Ages he is as shy in appearing, lest he should destroy the prevailing Sadducism.

Fourthly, And that there may be nothing wanting to compleat his Delusions, Satan is wonderfully cunning in making choice of fit and proper Instruments, and in furnishing those out, both with all the plausible Arts of Deceiving, and also with suitable Qualities, whom he employs to sow the Tares of corrupt Doctrines in the Souls of Men. This the Holy Spirit is particularly careful to Inform us of, and to Forewarn us against 'em; especially 2 Cor. 11. 14. where the Apostle tells us, That As Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light (which he is, when under the plausible Appearance and Colour of Advancing God's Honour in some of his Attributes, and of setting up Gospel-Truths, as he would have 'em taken to be, he does Introduce Heresies, and Vile Practices into the Church, that do most effectually undermine God's Authority amongst Men, and wholly Overthrow all Reverence to him:) So that those Teachers, his Agents, who do Infuse any of his false Doctrines into Men's Hearts, Are deceitful Workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, ver. 13:

IV. As to the skillfulness of the Seedsman, Satan is wonderfully cunning in making choice of fit and proper Instruments, and in furnishing those with the proper Arts of Deceiving, and with suitable Qualities, whom he employs to sow the Seed of corrupt Doctrine in the Life, Souls of Men.

They are deceitful Workers, Teaching the Doctrines of Christianity by Halves, sometimes Advancing Morality, and a Virtuous



Life, with the Neglect, if not with the Contempt of, and in opposition to an Orthodox and sound Faith; sometimes on the other side, placing all Religion in *Believing aright* concerning God and Christ, and decrying the Interest of Good Works in our *Justification* before God. And to the End they may be the better fitted to Deceive, he is not wanting to *Furnish out his Instruments with all the most plausible Arts of Deceiving*. And their deceitful Working is usually in the very same manner as the Devil's was. That wicked Spirit would have Tempted our Saviour desperately to throw himself down from the Pinnacle of the Temple, and to presume upon God's working of a Miracle to preserve him in so doing. And to Encourage him therein, he quotes a Text of Scripture, which is in *Psal. 91. 11, 12. For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone*. In the Quotation of which Place of Scripture, you may observe, he leaves out what makes against him, which are these Words, *To keep thee in all his Ways*. The Words Entire are, *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all his Ways*; meaning, That so long as a Man keeps himself in the Ways of God, and in the Use of those due Means, which he has prescrib'd; he will not fail to Preserve him. And in the very same manner do most Heretical Deceivers delude the World. They will pretend the highest Veneration and Respect for Scripture, and none are so apt to quote it for every Thing they say, as they: But then if you observe them, they either leave out such Expressions, as make against them, or consider not the Scope and Meaning thereof, with reference to the Context and Meaning of the foregoing and following words, or they put some forc'd and violent Interpretation upon 'em, not at all agreeable to the meaning thereof in that Place. Thus they are *deceitful Workers*.

And, *They will Transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ*, putting on the Garb and outward Appearance of Apostolick Vertues and Graces, when they go forth into the World to disperse these their Errors. Indeed Satan is careful to furnish those, whom he sends out with *suitable and agreeable Qualities*, according to the Nature of those Errors they are to sow in the World. If their Business is to undermine the Faith of Christians, to disparage the more mysterious Doctrines of Christianity, of a *Trinity of Persons in one Divine Nature*, and of the *Divinity and Satisfaction of Christ*, and to place the whole of the Christian Religion in Morality, and a Good Life; why then he will adorn his Agents with the fair and plausible Vertues of Humanity, and Courtely, and Civility of Manners, which are most taking amongst Persons of better Quality, the likeliest soil to sow Heterodox Opinions of that Nature in.

Such as place  
all Religion  
in Morality,  
shall be adorned  
with Humanity.

But on the other side, Is it his Design to starve that Part of Christianity, which consists in the Practice of moral Vertues, and to Represent it all as *Mystery*? Why then his Agents shall have the Gift of Uttering themselves in Canting Phrases, and obscure and dark Forms of Expressions, that seem to have something of Mysteryousness in them. And all they Teach, it shall look as if it were Inspir'd, being pour'd forth with mighty Noise and Vehemence, accompany'd sometimes with Tremblings and Shakings, as if under some strong Impulse from a Spirit within.

Such as turn  
it all into Mystery,  
shall be Gifted with  
Canting.

And



And yet to see the *Crooked Windings of this Subtle Serpent*, you shall observe (which is a wonderful Artifice of Satan) even those very Persons, whose Doctrines do directly tend to render an Honest and Upright Conversation very insignificant in Religion, to be notwithstanding themselves very Demure, and in outward Appearance sanctify'd Persons; no Swearers, nor Riotous Livers, and free from those gross and scandalous Immoralities, which some of the Professors of a much better Religion are perhaps notoriously Guilty of; inasmuch that the undiscerning Part of Men do often Embrace those very Heresies, which naturally and directly tend to Encourage Sin, and Dishonesty, and Unmercifulness: And in a word, To render Men secure in the Practice of any Wickedness merely for the sake of the appearing Holiness of those Men's Lives, who teach those Principles tending to Immorality. And this is an extraordinary Reach in Satan. That Impure Spirit is sometimes content, that some of his principal Agents should not be immorally Wicked; for by a few such Men's seeming Godliness, he Propagates those dangerous and destructive Principles, which will make Multitudes become securely, and without Remorse of Conscience, Villainously Wicked.

And now there is not a greater Difficulty perhaps in the whole Christian Warfare, than to preserve One-self untainted with Heresies, and the most poisonous Errors, colour'd over with a meer Resemblance of Gospel-Truth.

But however, as difficult as it is, no honest Mind, that will be careful to weigh those Poisonous Doctrines, and the Persons who Propagate them in the *Ballance of the Sanctuary*; that is, by those Rules, which the Scripture has given us: But may be able to discover the Lightness and Vanity of both, and so to Renounce both one and the other. And that which every one is to do, that he may Renounce them, is not to be too easy in Entertaining 'em, because Plausible at first appearance; but Impartially to Try and Examine by a true and infallible Touch-stone, both their Doctrines, and those, who Propagate them, whether they Be of God. Thus we are directed, 1 Joh. 4. 5. *Beloved, Believe not every Spirit, but try it, whether the Spirits, whether they are of God, because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.*

And how shall you do this? Why the Scripture does give you Two most infallible and plain Rules whereby to do it. The one *Matth. 7. 16.* The other Verse immediately following the now cited Place of *St. John*. That in *Matthew* is this, *You shall know them by their Fruits.* If their Doctrines are apt to Infuse into your Minds any unworthy and undue Thoughts of God, or any Seeds of Impiety, Injustice, Uncleannefs, Uncharitableness, Sedition, Rebellion, in a word, if they do Countenance any Immorality, &c. Let their Pretences and Carriage be never so fair and free from Scandal, to be sure they are *False Prophets*, and the Devil's Agents. The Rule given us, 1 Joh. 4. 2, 3. whereby to discover the Doctrines of Satan's Infusing, is this; *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come into the Flesh, is not of God.* By Jesus Christ being come in the Flesh, is meant, that Jesus Christ took our Nature upon him, that he might be a Me-

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diatour

And yet sometimes the Crooked Serpent by Men seeming Godly, will propagate Principles extremely Immoral.

The most difficult Part of a Christian's Warfare is to preserve One self untainted with Heretical Pravity, colour'd over with the Varnish of Gospel-Truth.

But yet by Trying it by proper Rules it may be done, viz.

I. By its Tendency to an Ill Life.

II. By its Tendency to keep off from our Dependence upon the Mediation of Christ, for the Acceptance of a good One.

diatour betwixt God and Us, to Reconcile the Father to us, by his Satisfaction and Intercession for us. And whosoever shall teach contrary to this, so as to take off our Dependance upon Christ, let him seem never so Zealous for a Good Life, his Doctrine is of Satan's devising.

The whole Design of Christianity is, no doubt, as appears from these Two former Rules, to make us Holy in this World; and yet withal to create in us such a Dependance and Reliance on Christ for Salvation, as to expect it, not on the account of our own Holy Performances, which are so Imperfect, but in the Vertue of Christ's Mediation with the Father for us. And whosoever will but carefully Examine the several false Doctrines, so much Preacht up at this Day by our Enemies on either side, by these Two Rules, shewing the *Design of Christianity*, I am verily perswaded, will find most of them to thwart one Part, or other of this Design; and that either they discourage Holiness, or if they seem to stand upon the Necessity thereof, they decry the Necessity of our Dependance upon Christ's Mediation for God's Acceptance of it to our Justification; and so by one, or other of these Rules, we may discover them to be Doctrines of Satan's infusing. Most of the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome* do plainly tend to make Men secure in a Course of Sin; and those *Antinomian* Tenets, wherewith some of our Dissenting Brethren are too much in Love, do also tend to the same, causing us to depend so entirely on Christ's satisfaction, as to make us neglect the *Working out our own Salvation*: On the contrary, the *Socinian*, at the same time he pretends much for Morality, and a Good Life, denies the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of Christ, and that God the Father gave him to be an *Attonement* for the Sins of Mankind, and in the Vertue of his precious Blood to Intercede in Heaven for our Reconciliation; so that he wholly takes off our Faith, or Dependance on Christ for Justification. Thus may the most dangerous Errors now in the Church of Christ, with a little Watchfulness and Care to examine the Tendency of them, be discovered by you from whose Suggestions they proceed, and that they are *Tares of the Enemies*, that is, the Devils sowing, whilst the Husbandman was asleep.

But do you, I beseech you, carefully beware of such false Doctrines, and deceitful Teachers; both which are Satan's Temptations to draw you unwittingly to sin against, and dishonour God: And tho' his Agents seem never so Demure, and appear never so Sanctify'd, who do teach Men such Doctrines; Beware of those *Wolves, who come to you in Sheeps cloathing, you shall know them by their Fruits*. If they shall endeavour to instill into your Minds any undue Apprehensions of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, contrary to what you are taught out of the Scripture in the Doctrine of our Church; or any pernicious Opinions, that in their Nature and Tendency shall render an Holy, Good Life unnecessary to our Justification; assure your selves they are no *Ministers of Christ*, but of Satan: And are set on work by him to destroy God's Authority, amongst Men, and to set up his own Laws in their Hearts, the Thing he aims at. And so much for this Time.

T H E  
Twelfth Lecture.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Pomps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.

THE Point that we are now upon, is to make as full a Discovery to you, as here we can, of that Great *Work of the Devil, his Tempting us to Sin*: A Work so eminently the Business and Employment of Satan, and so Dangerous and Destructive to Mankind, and also manag'd in such manifold and cunning Methods, that it ought particularly to be consider'd by us. "The Devil, says a Father, has nothing else that he does, but "Tempt us to Sin; He neither Eats, nor Drinks, nor Sleeps, nor "does he any thing else but Tempt, Deceive, and Subvert us. This "is his Meat, this is his Honour, this is his Joy. In this he is Indefatigable, and if he could have his Will, he would never cease "Tempting us, but that he is restrain'd by the Power of God.

And now in order to the Countermining and Defeating this mischievous *Work of his*: First, Having shew'd you, by what Temptations and Means he Overthrew the whole Race of Mankind, and drew it off from Obedience to God, to do Service to him: And, Secondly, Having also laid before you, such Temptations as he Levels against the Church of Christ, the true Servants of God, either utterly to destroy 'em, or to Corrupt their Religion, that by that they might Dishonour their Maker.

Thirdly, I am now to shew you, That next to his Destroying and Perverting of whole Churches, his great Industry is to gain over to his Party, or to Tempt to some grievous and scandalous Enormity, such Persons, as are more than ordinarily Eminent for their Rank, or Quality, their Order, or their Piety in the Church of God,

And, \* First, Such as are most Eminent for their Station, or Quality. Hence Elymas the Sorcerer, that Child of the Devil, apply'd himself so diligently to Sergius Paulus, a Deputy, and Great Man in his Country, to turn him from the Faith, Acts 13. 7, 8. And hence as in that long Catalogue of the Kings of Judah and Israel, how few were there, who were not Idolaters, and highly Infamous for some high Abomination or other? So, since the World became Christian, how many Kings of the Earth are there, who have Committed Fornication, that is, Idolatry with the Whore of Babylon, and liv'd De-

III.  
Satan's great Industry is to gain over to his Party, or to Tempt to some grievous and scandalous Enormity, such Persons, as are more than ordinarily Eminent for their Rank, their Order, or their Piety in the Church.

\* First, Such as are most Eminent for their Station or Quality.



*liciously with her, and how will both they, and the Merchants of the Earth, Weep and Mourn over her, when her Calamities come upon her, Rev. 18. 9. 11.* It is Astonishing to consider how, that so many of the Honourable, and the Rich, who of all Men living are Oblig'd to be Grateful to God, for so many extraordinary Favours and Blessings, which they Enjoy above other Men, should yet carry it so insolently against their Great Benefactor, lifting up their Heads above the Heavens, as it were, Trampling under Foot all Laws, both Divine and Humane; and both in Word and Deed denying and disowning any Powers above 'em. Why, this is not altogether from the Temptingness of Greatness and Riches, which it must be confessed, are alone a very considerable Temptation; but also from Satan's more than ordinary Industry to gain over to his Party and Interest, such Men above all others. For why? These are *Generals*, and *Great Officers*, as it were, in the *Church Militant*; and these therefore, if they can be but Prevail'd upon to Revolt from God, all the Herd of Mankind besides will in a manner follow of course.

Such Men's Wickedness, not altogether from the Temptingness of Riches, but the Industry of Satan, to get over such leading Men to his Party.

Such Men's Examples, if bad, of malignant Influence, because conspicuous.

There is indeed (Satan does very well know it) nothing that has a more malignant Influence upon the Lives and Manners of Men, than the lewd and profligate Courses of those, who are *Eminent in Quality, or Power*. Their Examples are doubtless of vast Importance. As in this World they live in a Croud all their Life: So they pass not into the Other, without a Train of Followers at their Heels. If their Examples are extraordinarily Good, they bring many to Heaven along with 'em; if they have been Vicious and Naughty, whole Troops follow to Hell after them; for Subjects, Children, Servants, Dependants, all take after their Lord and Master, except it be very rarely: So that those, who abound either in Wealth, or Honour, and do therefore think they have a greater Privilege to Sin than others, because they have greater Temptations to it, than other Men, are miserably mistaken; for as their Lives being publick and conspicuous, lye more open to the Observation and Imitation of the World, and therefore do cause more to Sin: So they shall not have their own only, but the Sins of others (so far as they have Influenc'd 'em to Sin) to Answer for.

And will bring upon 'em the Guilt, not only of their own, but of other Men's Sins, because

Their Actions have the force of a Precept, as well as of a Pattern, which Inferiours are afraid to shew their dislike of.

And the Reason hereof is this. The Actions of Great Men have some Force of a Precept with 'em, as well as of a Pattern; For as One well observes, Those who are much Ey'd, cannot Sin singly, both because Men of weaker Minds, and less Consideration, look upon them as the great Masters of Knowledge, and Bravery, and therefore strive to imitate, and be like them: And also, because they have many Dependants, that hope to receive something from them, and to be some way Better'd by them; and this they cannot hope to be, except they Copy out their Examples, and shew their Love and Honour, or rather Flattery to them, in Endeavouring what they can to be like them. And therefore we do commonly see the Generality, upon any Change, are ready to take up with the Religion, or Transcribe the Pattern, and Ape the Actions and Vices of their Prince, or other Governour; and their Faults, as well as Habits, shall become the Fashion of the Country: So that an Unholy Prince, shall seldom have a Religious People; a Debauchd Nobility and Gentry, a Devout and Orderly Neighbourhood and Fami-

Family; a Wicked Father, Pious Children; or an Evil Master, Good Servants: But their Actions have the Force, not only of a Pattern, but also of a Rule and Law, which Inferiors and Dependants are affraid to go against. So that it is not to be wonder'd, that the Devil should be more than ordinarily industrious, to gain over to his Party, such as are most Eminent for their *Station* and *Quality*. (One such tall Cedar sweeps away with him in his Fall, all the lower Shrubs within the reach of its Branches.)

But then it does infinitely concern Persons of Quality, of all Men Living, utterly to Renounce the Ways of Sin, because their ill Examples are of such Bad and *malignant Influence* upon others. And they should *Renounce* all the ways of Scandalous and Notorious ill Living, as they are Influential upon others, not only for the sake of other Men, but also for their own dear sakes. For alas! If a Man's own single Sins, unrepented of, will Plunge him into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone; how Deep into the bottomless Pit must they sink, who have, besides their own Personal Transgressions, the Sins of many others pressing 'em Downwards, and loading 'em with all the Curses of Hell for the ill Example, and other Motives to Wickedness, which they gave 'em? So that it concerns the Great Ones, of all others, to look to their Ways, and vigourously to *Renounce* and Resist the Temptations of Satan to Sin and Wickedness.

Secondly, *The Devil is also wonderfully Industrious to Tempt into some scandalous Sin, or wicked Course of Life; or at least-wise to Invent and Propagate some scandalous Story, against such as are Eminent on the account of their Order; viz. The Ministers of Religion.*

We of the Sacred Function are design'd in a more Eminent manner, it must be confest, to be the *Light of the World*, to be *Candles set, not under a Busbel, but on a Candlestick, that we may give Light to all that are in the House*: So that if he can draw a thick Cloud of Ignorance over our Understandings, and bring Immorality into our Practice, what he may do with the rest of Mankind, who are to be Guided by us, he does Rationally enough Conclude. He is indeed doubly Enrag'd against us, both because we are the Men, who in the very Nature and Design of our Office, are to Destroy his Kingdom; and because the rest of the World do altogether Eye us for their Pattern: Insomuch, that they are generally more influenc'd by our Lives, than by our Doctrine; and are exceedingly scandaliz'd, so as to think they may Sin with Allowance and Excuse, if we our selves shall happen in the least to miscarry. For these Reasons there are no *Wiles*, nor *Artifices*, nor *prevailing Temptations*, left untry'd; whereby Satan does not Attempt to withdraw the Ministers of Religion into some scandalous and enormous Crimes; so that when any of the Holy Order happen to be overtaken in a Fault, it is not so much to be wonder'd at, as having not only the same Natural Infirmities with other Men, but far more furious Assaults made upon 'em, to Overcome 'em: That indeed there are so many shining Lights, as this Church and Nation may justly Glory in having at this Day, is because *We are kept by the Power of God to Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1.15. But that a Minister of Religion should sometimes Fall, as well others, and that very foully too, is

H h

*Great Men therefore must, of all others, Renounce the Temptations of Satan.*

II.

*Such as are most Eminent on the account of their Order, viz. the Ministers of Religion.*

*He is doubly Enrag'd against such, both because in the Nature and Design of their Office, they are to destroy his Kingdom, & because the rest of the World do altogether Eye them for their Pattern.*

*Hence no Temptation left untried, to withdraw such into some scandalous not Enormity.*



not to be Admir'd at, much less made a matter of Reproach to the whole Order, as it commonly is; since our Saviour himself told *Peter*, *Behold Satan hath a Desire to have you*, (you above all Others) *that he may sift you as Wheat*, Luk. 22. 31. And he did sift that great Apostle to the Purpose; inasmuch, that he did wilfully Deny his Master Thrice.

And hence the more Industrious a Minister is, the more Industrious is Satan to Overcome him. Hence without doubt it was, that he singled out, as *St. Peter* you see before, so *St. Paul*, sending his Messenger, One of his Black Angels, to Buffet him, as you will see, 2 Cor. 12. 7. True it is, God in his wise and good Providence did order that Temptation of Satan's to a good End, and to the Advantage and Security of that Apostle: For he Gave him a Thorn in the Flesh, and permitted Satan's Messenger to Buffet him, lest he should be Exalted above measure, or to keep him Humble. But Satan no doubt did intend thereby (however his Designs were Over-ruled by the Divine Providence, as is most usual) to Overthrow *St. Paul*, because he was in Labours more abundant, in Stripes above measure, in Prisons more frequent, 2 Cor. 11. 23. that is, more Industrious in Propagating the Gospel than others, and came not a Whit Behind the very chiefest of the Apostles, ver. 5.

And in the very way, that such are most Serviceable to the Church of God, Satan does so order it, that they shall be Transported beyond the Bounds of Moderation and Sobriety, (wherein, for the most part, the Vertue does lye) into such Excesses, as are Sinful Enormities. Thus, is any One Zealous in the Cause of God against Sin and Wickedness, the wicked One will over-heat this Zeal into Censoriousness and Bitterness, into Fierceness and Cruelty, and very often into Faction and Schism. Again does he find a Person more than ordinarily Mortify'd, and Devout and Heavenly-minded; much given to Fasting and Prayer? Then will he be busy to let down into the Fancy of such a One, deluding Imaginations, and will tempt him by the sweetness of those Incombs, and Indwellings of the Spirit, as he thinks 'em, to lay aside the plain and easy Rule of God's Holy Word, as a dead Letter, and not Spiritual enough; and to give himself up to the Guidance of the Impulses of a Spirit within him, as if they were immediate Inspirations from God: By which fond Pretensions of Men, deluded by Satan, infinite Prejudice is done to Christianity, and occasion given to Profane Wits to deride real Prophecy, as Cheat and Imposture, of which we have lately seen a most sad Instance.

If he cannot prevail over him by real Mis-carriages, he will render him useless by forged Calumnies. But if this subtle Adversary, with all his Wiles and Artifices, cannot prevail over the Man of God, but that still he is Baffled in all his Attempts upon him; then he sets his Agents, Slanderers, and Whisperers on work, (for that their Tongues are set on Fire of Hell, the Scripture tells us, Jam. 3. 6.) to invent and propagate Scandals concerning him. And he does inspire the Calumniator to raise those false and injurious Reports, either purely by inventing 'em, without Ground, and thus even our Blessed Saviour was accus'd as an Enemy to Caesar, and a Sabbath-breaker, or by mis-interpreting of an innocent Behaviour and Action, as a scandalous Crime. And thus



thus again was the Son of God himself, and *John* the Baptist Traduc'd, and thus very frequently are the succeeding Ministers of Religion injur'd to this Day. *The Son of Man came Eating and Drinking*, that is, He affected nothing singular, nor differing from other Men in indifferent things, and they say, *Behold a man Gluttonous and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, Matth. 11. 19. On the other side, *John came neither Eating, nor Drinking*, used extraordinary Fastings above other Men, and they say he hath a Devil, ver. 18. And so it also fares with the succeeding Ministers of Religion. Is any One of a free, cheerful and sociable Disposition, and does not wholly abstain from appearing in Company? Then he is a Drunkard. Is he Frugal, and not given to Profuse Living? Then he is Covetous. Is he Conscientious in maintaining the Dues of his Church, and will not suffer 'em to be Lost or Invaded by the Sacrilege of Covetous Worldlings? Then he is Litigious and given to Law, he is Covetous, and what not? So exceeding Industrious, are Satan and his Agents, to Blacken the Reputation of the Ministers of *True Religion*, (I say of *True Religion*, for you may always observe with what Industry the real Vices of those, who are *Ministers in Heresy and Schism*, are kept secret.) And the only Reason thereof is this, to lessen the Authority of their Precepts and Example in the World, that they should not do that Good, that otherwise they might.

It does in Truth so exceedingly concern the Interest of Christianity, that the Reputation of its Ministers should be preserv'd un-  
 fully'd; and so injurious to Religion it self, are the Defamations of  
 such Persons, that *St. Paul* was careful to warn *Timothy*, that against  
 an Elder, that is, against a Minister, *He should not receive an Accusa-*  
*tion under Two, or Three Witnesses*, 1 Tim. 5. 19. Tho' a single Evi-  
 dence that was Credible, was sufficient against any other Person:  
 But so much, on the contrary, it is to the Advancement of Satan's  
 Kingdom, and so Satanically are the greatest Part of the World  
 dispos'd; that a vilifying Story, or a scandalous Report against  
 them, is more readily invented, more easily heard, and sooner be-  
 liev'd, nay, without any Ground at all surmis'd, than against any  
 other Person whatsoever. But let me tell you, that no good Chri-  
 stian, that desires the Destruction of Satan's, and the Advance-  
 ment of Christ's Kingdom in the World, will be forward to hear,  
 much less to Believe and Propagate Defamations of the Clergy; as  
 knowing it is the Policy of Satan, to put it into the Hearts of un-  
 charitable Spirits to surmise, and raise, and aggravate little vilify-  
 ing Stories of those in Holy Orders, as of some Indiscretion com-  
 mitted: This to make 'em cheap, and more scandalous, and false  
 Reports of Debauchery and Immorality, to render 'em Odious in  
 the World; and both on purpose to render their Labours and En-  
 deavours useless and ineffectual, to the Reformation and Amend-  
 ment thereof.

In short: Satan matters it not so much, whether by real Sin, or  
 by slanderous Reports, he lessens the Authority and Influence of the  
 Clergy, his Avow'd Enemies, whose peculiar Business it is to destroy  
 his Usurpt Dominion, and to Propagate the Kingdom of God in  
 the World. By real Sins indeed, he would rather choose, if he

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ly Concerns  
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putation of its  
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most as much  
could, as real Sin.*

could, and does therefore mainly Endeavour to have the Clergy Blemish'd; but meerly by raising the Scandal, be it as well False, as True, he gains his End, according to *Machiavel*, his great Secretary's Maxim, *Fortiter accusare & aliquid adhibere*: 'Throw Dirt upon a Man, and the Stain will in some measure stick. Such is the Censorious Humour of the World, as to think there must be something in it, when a Slander is broacht; and so maliciously are wicked Men bent against the Ministers of Religion especially, as greedily to swallow every thing, that tends to lessen their Reputation. In a word, By both he gains his End, which is, to have Religion it self wounded, through the sides of its Ministers. And whether any of 'em shall really mis-carry, or be falsely Defam'd for so doing, he knows, the World upon either account will *Abhor the Offerings of the Lord*, and even a meer Slander will be such a stumbling Block to many, *As to make the Lord's people to transgress.*

*It behoves the Clergy therefore so far to Renounce and Resist the Devil's Temptations, as to take care, not only to be really Blameless, but also to Abstain from all Appearance of Evil.* And this being so, since it is so much the Interest of the Devil's Kingdom, to have us Ensnar'd by his Temptations, for which reason he does therefore Ply us especially: And since the Generality of the World are so *Satanically* dispos'd, as easily to receive the worst Impressions of us; it concerns us therefore, of every Order, to follow these excellent Directions given by the Apostle more immediately to the Higher, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. 6, 7.* And we must take heed therefore, that we be *Blameless, Vigilant, Sober, of good Behaviour, apt to Teach, not given to Wine, no Strikers, not greedy of filthy Lucre, but Patient, not Brawlers, not Covetous; but such as rule well our own Houses, having our Children in subjection with all Gravity; not Novices, lest being lifted up with Pride, we fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* And moreover it concerns the Interest of Christ's Kingdom, that we have *A good Report of those, who are without, lest we fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* And in a word, of all Others, we must therefore take care not only to be really Blameless, but also to *Abstain from all appearance of Evil*, *1 Thes. 5. 22.*

III. Lastly, *The Devil is most incessantly buisied to Tempt to the Commission of some scandalous Enormity, any Person indifferently, who is more than ordinarily Holy.* Satan exactly knows the Temper of the World, that if such a Person chance to fall at any time into some notorious Sin, tho' he suddenly rise again by Repentance, those who are Good will be mightily Scandaliz'd and Offended thereat, and will be apt to despair of themselves, when they see one so much beyond 'em in Piety, fall before 'em; that the less serious and looser sort of People will rejoyce to see a Good Man Trip, because this they think will countenance them in their Impieties, and vicious Course of Living. And as for the *Atheistical* and Debauch'd People of the World, that they will Triumph in it, and cry down all Religion for *Hypocrisy*, when they see its greatest Examples commit any thing that is ill. This the Devil knows very well, and withal, that after such a Fall, the *Laps'd* Person shall be render'd almost incapable ever after of Converting others by his Example, or Exhortations. For as soon will he to his Example, tho' he Repent never so heartily, and recover his former State with Advantage; yet it will be a continual Blot in his most incapa- Scutcheon, that he did so and so, like that, *Excepting the matter of Uriah*, was in *David's*. And as for his Exhortations, let him be who he

he will, whether Minister, Magistrate, Parent, or Master, that goes about to Reprove and Admonish others; the Criminal, instead of being Convinc'd and Better'd thereby, will presently Return upon him in Thought at least-wise, if not in Word, with a Why did you do so your self? And now for these Reasons, I say, the Devil lays a close Siege against a Person of Exemplary Piety and Goodness. As for those, who are already Vicious, he reckons himself secure of them; so he does not so much concern himself about them: He only throws a Temptation now and then into their way, leaving 'em for the most part to follow the Bent of their own Inclinations: But against this *Bulwark* of Religion, a Person of bright and shining Graces, he draws up all his Artillery, and levels all his Instruments of Battery. Thus he attackt Holy *Job*, when he found that Prosperity would not corrupt him, he goes another way to work, and with unheard-of Afflictions, one following upon the heels of another, he endeavour'd to force him to Blaspheme his Maker, and desperately to *Curse God and dye*. He is a great Master of Politicks, and therefore takes such Measures as a Crafty General in the Conquest of an Enemies Country. A wise Commander will always lye down the before Place of greatest Consequence, and upon the Taking of which the rest will fall in of Course; so the Devil, his great Attempt is to Foil an exemplary Pattern of Religion, whose Fall he thinks will shrewdly stagger many others.

*Against this Bulwark of Religion therefore the Devil draws up all his Artillery.*

But the incessant Industry of Satan to overcome a more than ordinary Piety, and the Pride he takes therein, I cannot better represent to you, than in the following Parable given us out of Antiquity. "*Lucifer* having sent forth his Officers to fill the World with Death and Ruine, they all went on their several Errands: Upon their Return he demands an account of their Proceedings, What Mischiefs they had done, what Plagues they had scatter'd, and what Calamities they had sent amongst affrighted Mortals. One of them more forward than the rest, Replies, He had been a Fortnight wandring about, and at last had Over-turn'd some Merchant-Ships at Sea, insomuch that both Men and Goods were lost. The Prince of Darkness enrag'd at his Laziness, instead of a Reward, gave him an Hundred Stripes, because he had done no more Hurt all that time. Another Spirit stands forth, and Boasts, that he had been for a Month together Contriving how to set such a City on Fire, and had at last Effect'd it; and he also was severely Punisht for his Idleness, and neglect of Accomplishing his Design sooner. At last comes forth a Third, that had been Fourty Years absent, and being ask'd how he had Promoted the Interest of the Black-Empire, answer'd, Those Fourty Years have I been Tempting such a Religious Man to Fornication, and have at last prevail'd, and at this time he wallows securely in his Sin. *Beelzebub* immediately rises from his Throne, hugs the mischievous Fiend, Embraces the Child of Darkness, and with Rhetorick fetcht from Hell, Commends him before all the howling Crew, as having done a greater Exploit, after Fourty Years Travel, than the other did by Afflicting and Consuming so many Men, Ships, and Houses in a few Days and Weeks. The Moral and Design of the Fable is no other than this: That if he can make a sin-

*The Pride and Pains he takes in overcoming such a One, represented in a Parable.*



cere Believer, weary of his Heavenly Mindedness, and burning Zeal to God's Glory, he values that Piece of Mischief more than if he Tempted a great many of those, who are already Wicked, to greater Impieties. And that not only, because of the Pride and Glory he takes in Conquering such a *Heroe* in Christianity; but because to make One, who by his Exemplary Piety and Vertue, was an Eminent Instrument in the Advancement of God's Glory, to become, by his Revolt from God, as great an Engine in promoting the Kingdom of Darkness, is to his Credit and Interest both.

*The more Exemplarily Pious therefore any Man is, the more it concerns him to beware of the Devil, and not to think himself secure on this side Heaven, from Satan's Temptations; but He that thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall, the more it concerns him to beware of the Devil, and all his Temptations.*

And this consider'd, the more Exemplarily Pious therefore any Man is, the more it concerns him, to beware of the Devil, and not to think himself secure on this side Heaven, from Satan's Temptations; but *He that thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall, the more it concerns him to beware of the Devil, and all his Temptations.* I Cor. 10. 12. And therefore I shall bespeak such in the words of St. Peter, 2 Epist. 3. 17, 18. *Ye therefore Beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

In a word, and to sum up in short what has been spoke on this Point; I have at length shew'd you, that next to the Destroying and Perverting of whole Churches, the Devil's great Industry is to gain over to his Party; or to Tempt to the Commission of some grievous Sin, such Persons as are more than ordinarily Eminent for their Rank, or Quality, their Order, or their Piety, in the Church of God. And this being so; since such are the great Mark of Satan, it concerns those excellent Persons, who are eminently Great, or Good, that they do especially, and above all other Men absolutely, and entirely, and utterly Renounce, and resist all and every the Temptations of Satan, so as not to yield to any of 'em. Such are to look upon themselves as the great Commanders in the Church Militant, who are to lead, and to go before others in the Battles of the Lord, against Sin and Satan; but if any such should Cowardly Give back in the day of Battle and Temptation, they put a stumbling Block, and are an occasion to fall in their Brother's way, Rom. 14. 13. And what says our Saviour in such a Case? Matth. 18. 6, 7. *Who so shall offend One of those little Ones, which Believe in him, that is, discourage and drive from the Christian Practice, by his scandalous Life, any the meanest of his Disciples, It were better for him, that a Mill-stone were hanged about his Neck, and he were drowned in the Depth of the Sea. Woe unto the World because of Offences; he adds, It must needs be that Offences come, but Woe to that Man by whom the Offence cometh. So much it concerns Persons Eminent in any Kind, that they be Good, as well as Great.*

## T H E

## Thirteenth Lecture.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; the Dumps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.

HAVING shew'd you, *Who the Devil is*, and *What are his Works of Sin*, and how we must *Absolutely Renounce* both him and them. And as to that other great Work of his, *his Tempting of us to Sin*; having shewed you, First, By what Methods he over-threw the whole Race of Mankind at first; and Secondly, How he does still endeavour the Ruine of the Church of Christ; and especially Thirdly, Of those who are most considerable for their *Rank*, or *Order*, or *Piety* therein.

I am now Lastly, in order to a more full Display of that great Work of the Devil, his Tempting us to Sin, to discover to you some of the more remarkable Temptations at least-wise, whereby he applies himself to all Persons indifferently consider'd, in the Church of Christ, be they High, or Low, to draw them into Sin.

In the former Attempts upon all Mankind, upon the Church of God, and upon those considerable and leading Persons therein, whose Fall sweeps Multitudes along with 'em into Sin and Ruine; Satan shew'd more of his Ambition and Pride, as in setting up for a Dominion in direct Opposition to God's: So in waging a War with the greatest Bodies of Men, and the most considerable Leaders in the *Church Militant*. But in these his latter Attempts upon particular Persons, whereby that Spirit appears not content to Foil greater Numbers, but moreover pursues his Victory to the picking up here and there every particular Stragler; he expresses more of his inveterate Malice, in that he is so wholly bent upon Mischief and Destruction, as to stick at no Pains, and to leave no Methods untry'd, whereby he may destroy every particular Soul amongst the Sons of Men.

And indeed the Devil's Temptations are the more dangerous, in that they are not easily known when they are his, and cannot always be distinguish'd from such as the World, and our own Flesh do give us; for which Reason, at the motion of these two latter, we do those things without Fear, which if we knew the Devil had a Hand in, we should tremble at the Thoughts of Committing. And indeed it is but seldom, the Devil does immediately, by himself, actuate any One to do Evil; but generally he makes use of the World, and our own Flesh, as his immediate Instruments, to move

*Lastly, what Temptations Satan levels against all Persons indifferently consider'd.*

*The Devil's Temptations not easily known to be his, nor always distinguishable from those of the World, and the Flesh, which are*

manag'd and us to it: Whilst he himself stands behind the Curtain, managing directed by and directing those, our other Enemies, to take their Advantages against us. However, so far as the Scripture does discover him.

Some of the to us any Methods of Temptations to be his, we may safely ascribe most consider- 'em unto him. And some of the more considerable and dangerous able of his of 'em, I will lay before you.

Methods of As First, The Devil does miserably delude People into his Power, by Tempting us letting 'em alone to be Obedient to God in some Particulars, the better to discover d. detain 'em perfect Slaves to himself in others. This is call'd a Dividing

I. He permits, between God and Mammon, Matth. 6. 24. And indeed amongst the if not fur- manifold Delusions of Satan, there is not a more fatal and mischievous One to the Souls of Men, than the Hypocrisy of a partial a partial O- and Un-uniform Obedience, which the Devil does willingly enough bedience to allow us in. I say, The Devil does willingly enough allow Persons to be God in some partially, or in part Obedient; for when this cunning Deceiver can- Particulars, not prevail on some to be meer Libertines, to throw off all the Bonds the better to detain them and Ties of Religion; to be as Outragious in Profaneness, Impieties, perfect Slaves Villanies, Whoredoms, and all sorts of Wickednesses, as some of his to himself in Black Disciples are; he is then willing to Compound the matter others. with such, and so that they will be his a little, he'll contentedly allow 'em to be God's very much: Knowing very well, that if we hold out one disloyal Fort against God, retain but one Rebel-Lust, and give not up the whole Man unto Christ, it will as certainly Condemn us, tho' not to so great Degrees of Punishment, as if we were wholly Devoted to Satan, and gave our selves up to follow all our Brutish Lusts; the Word of God assuring us, that *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. 10. And our Saviour declaring to us, that he will not be serv'd by Halves, nor endure the Devil to share with him in his Kingdom over us; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*, Luk. 16. 13. Thus the Devil knows it is his Interest to allow Men to be partially Obedient to God.

This a most fatal Delu- And, There is not a more fatal and mischievous Delusion of Satan than this is; especially, when the partially Obedient exchanges some Sins of a scandalous Name, for their contrary Vertues, but lives notwithstanding in some Sins on other Impieties of a higher Nature. I say, when he changes some ly of a scandalous Name, particular Sins only of a scandalous Name, as his former Debaucht and Lewd Course of Life, for a quite contrary One of Temperance and Chastity. He now assures himself, it was by the motion of are exchang- ed for contra- ry Vertues, but with the Retention of Sect of Quakers, who have formerly been loose and riotous Livers, Impieties of Triumph very much in their present State, as certainly from God; a higher Nature. because they no sooner became of this way, but they ceas'd to be Drunkards, and Swearers, and lewd Companions, and the like: Whereas, alas! The deluded Wretch has but Exchang'd some gross Sins of a more scandalous Name, for other Impieties of a higher Nature. For now instead of the former more Carnal Sins, he has receiv'd into his Heart the more Spiritual and Devilish Ones, of Pride and Haughtiness, and Contempt of others; being so far from In Honour preferring other Men, that he will not give the least Honour to whom Honour is due. He now decries the inspir'd Writings of God, as a

dead



dead Letter, and Blasphemously entitles every foolish and deceitful Imagination of his own corrupt Heart, to the motion of the Holy Spirit; preferring the latter infinitely before the former. Nay, he now denies all the great Principles of Christianity; the Divinity, Sufferings, and Satisfaction of Christ, with the Resurrection of the Body, as most of our present Quakers do, and so is turn'd meer Deist at the best. And now who that considers this, can think otherwise, but that the *Unclean Spirit went out of that Man, only to return into the house from whence he went out, and to take with himself seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, that they entering in, and dwelling there, the last State of that man might be worse than the first?*

*Matth. 12. 43, 44, 45.* This is certain, the most Irreclaimable of all Sinners are those, who have exchange'd some ill Practices, for others equally Wicked, and for impious Principles; for such do fix themselves in a full Perswasion, That their present Way is of God, seeing it is contrary to the former, which was undoubtedly the way of Satan: Whereas in Truth, both their former ill Practices, and their present evil Temper and Principles, are the Children of the same Father, tho' unlike to one another in outward Features. So fatal a Delusion it is of the Devil's, to allow Sinners in performing a kind of *Partial Obedience* to God; nay to further 'em perhaps in the throwing off some sensual and grossly scandalous Courses, that he may more securely detain 'em Servants and Slaves to himself, in the less discernible sins of spiritual Wickedness.

Secondly, Another usual Policy of the Devil's, in corrupting of our Manners, is to *Put plausible Names upon the worst Sins, and under that disguise to cheat Persons into a good Opinion of 'em, and then to commit 'em.* And he had the Impudence to Tempt even our Saviour himself in this manner. He would have had him to throw himself headlong from the Pinnacle of the Temple, alledging that God would give his Angels charge concerning him, and in their hands they should bear him up, *Matth. 4. 6.* And this no doubt he would have him believe, was a *Trusting in God.*

And in like manner, by a Satanical Device, the Presumption of some, that they are the Elect, is call'd their Faith, by which they shall be Justified. Rioting and Drunkenness is call'd good Fellowship, and to be easily withdrawn into it, the Effects of good Nature. Covetousness, Gripping and Extortion, is term'd a providing for One's own, which he that does not do, is worse than an Infidel. And on the contrary, to be Prodigal and Profuse, is to be Hospitable and Charitable. Spite, Malice, and Revenge is call'd a Hating of other Men's Sins: And the most bitter and fierce Contentions, nay the most cruel and bloody Persecutions, a Zeal for God, and true Religion; and when that Temper is justly expos'd to Hatred and Abhorrence, then a Lukewarmness, and a meer Indifferency in matters of Religion, whether Truth, or Heresy prevails; *Gallio's caring for none of those things,* is styl'd the calm and sweet Temper and Spirit of the Gospel. Thus does Sin pass in the World currantly under the mask of Vertue. Vice appearing in its own Colours is so odious a thing, that no one but must be ashamed to own it: But being adorn'd by the Cunning of Satan with Titles of Respect, and in the shews of Vertue, it is lookt upon with no evil Eye; but gets Ap-

probation and Reputation amongst Men. But the Devil gets a Passport for several Sins into the World, not only by giving 'em the Name of Vertues : But,

III. *By changing the Nature of several Divine Graces and Vertues, so that they degenerate into very great Sins.* It being much the Devil's Policy to Transport Persons out of that Moderation wherein Vertue does for the most Part consist, into that Excess which much resembles it, but is really exceedingly sinful and hurtful to Men's Souls. This we gather to be the Devil's Policy from 2 Cor. 2. 11. where the Apostle advises the *Corinthians to Forgive*, at the last, that Incestuous Person amongst 'em, whom they had deservedly Excommunicated, and to receive him to the Communion of the Church, being he had Humbled himself, and Repented; and that Mercy he would have 'em shew him, lest Satan should get an Advantage over 'em: *For we are not ignorant of his Devices*, says he, that is, lest the too long continuance of the Punishments they inflicted upon the Penitent Offender, might be made use of by Satan to the hurt and ruine of the Church, by hightning their Zeal against Sin into an Irreconcilableness to the Sinner. And indeed there are many Sins and Vertues so near in their Nature, that the Passage from one to the other is hardly discernible; insomuch, that by the Art of Satan, we easily slide from one to the other: As Obstinacy in standing out against all Conviction concerning the Truth, is easily mistaken for Constancy in the Faith, and the Love of Our-selves, for the Love of God. But especially, that Zeal for God's Glory, now mention'd, a most Excellent Grace in it self, is often, and that easily Transported into Cruelty, as we see it was in St. Paul, who out of a Zeal for the Law, *Beyond measure persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it*, Gal. 1. 13. Thus by changing the Nature of several Divine Graces and Vertues, so that they become very great sins, does Satan easily betray us into them.

*Sins thus mistaken are seldom Repented of.* And what is worse, Sin thus mistaken for Vertue is hardly ever afterwards Repented of; for whereas Sin, when it appears bare-fac'd, and in its own Colours, and is known to be so, is an ugly Monster, and is no sooner Committed, but it scares the Conscience into Grief, Anguish, and Repentance; when it is thus mistaken for real and true Vertue, it is not only securely, and without the least Reluctancy and Remorse committed; but is confidently Glorify'd in, and the Sinner grows Proud of those Villanous Practices, for which he ought to *Humble himself in Sackcloth and Ashes*.

IV. Fourthly, It is a most destructive Policy of Satan, *To put New* By putting *Beginners in the Spiritual Life, upon greater Severities and Strictnesses* Novices upon *in Religion, than they are capable of, on purpose, that when they grow* undertaking *weary thereof, and cannot go through with, they may, together with those* Severities, *their voluntary Severities, throw all Religion aside, as too burthensome, and not at all practicable.* This we gather to be a Policy of Satan's, from that Prudent Advice of St. Paul's, 1 Cor. 7. 5. which he gives to Marry'd People; that *Except it be with consent for a time, that they* might give themselves to Fasting and Prayer, they should not prescribe to themselves too long Abstinences from one another, lest Satan thereof, they should Tempt them for their Incontinency, so we Translate it, but the Word in the Original signifies, *want of Ability to Contain, or Abstain:* Which

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Which Inability, or Weakness to go through any *voluntary* and *undertaken* Piece of Discipline, is an occasion of Temptation, and will be an Advantage to the Tempter; by which, when he does at any time Attempt such a Person, he may probably enough Overcome.

Which Inability, or Weakness, I say, to go through any *voluntary* and *undertaken* Piece of Discipline, as of long Fastings, and Watchings at such set Hours of the Night, or the Performance of certain Vows, which some do lay upon themselves; these, tho' they may be serviceable to promote a spiritual Life, if discreetly and advisedly undertaken by a Person, and with a just Consideration had to his own Ability and Circumstances: yet they are greater Severities than what many can go through with, and when impos'd upon themselves by such, they give occasion to Satan to Tempt 'em to throw off those voluntary Services, together with all Religion, as not Performable by Flesh and Blood, or by any thing short of Angels. Whereas indeed, it is not the Substantials of Religion, such as our Saviour prescrib'd, whose *Yoke is easy, and whose Burden is light*, Matth. 11. 30. that are so; but those Accessories and Appendages to it, which some do indiscreetly, and without regard to their own Capacities and Circumstances, lay upon themselves.

And here it may be useful to let you know, what a Great Master in the spiritual Life observes, concerning the difference between God's Ordering, and the Devil's Management of Men in these matters. *Penae de Disciplina Spirituum, Cap. 6.* "God begins with us at low Degrees, and gently leads us from an imperfect, to a perfect State. He has regard to Persons and their Age, and imparts one degree of Wisdom to the Aged, another to Youth, one to Beginners, another to the Perfect. But the Devil, on the contrary, observes no Order, but darts into our Souls unseasonable Heats, and forthwith suggests Excesses in Devotion. He persuades such immediately to undertake immoderate Fastings and Watchings, and to mortify the Body by intolerable Penances. And these Burdens, because they lay upon themselves without measure, they are not able to bear; and then their Strength being broke, and the Vigour of their Minds abated, they do at length backslide into meer Indifferency and Looseness. And yet to see the crooked Windings of this *wily Serpent*, as much as he is for screwing Persons up to Excesses in Religion.

Fifthly, *Satan by Injecting of evil Thoughts into our Minds, to disorder and disturb our Devotions, is very Industrious to Unhallow and Spoil those Services, whereby we shall most really, and immediately, and directly Honour and Glorify our Maker, and Benefit our own Souls.* The Devil being a Spirit, can find an Entrance into our Spirits by ways which we are not sensible of. And being Divine Worship is the chief of all our Services we pay to our Maker, as being that wherein we do most immediately and directly of all others, Glorify God, and derive down Blessings upon our own Souls, if rightly perform'd; the Devil is therefore too too busy about us, when we are at our Devotions, to unhallow and spoil 'em. Thus we read, *Job 1. 6.* that *when the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also amongst them.* And so likewise *Zechar. 3. 1.* we find, that *when Joshua the High-Priest stood before the Angel of the Lord*

*The difference between God's Ordering, and the Devil's Management of Men in these Matters.*

*V. By injecting of Evil Thoughts into our Minds at our Devotions, to unhallow those Services, whereby we do really and most immediately glorify God, and benefit our own Souls.*



Lord, Satan stood at his Right-hand to Resist him. And the Best of Christians also, who upon other Objects of far less Concern, and at other times, can fix their Minds steddily, do often complain, that sometimes in their Prayers they are strangely broken, and the Intention of their Minds frequently taken off by odd Thoughts, roving Fancies, and far-fetcht Imaginations. This sure cannot happen, but by the importunate Urgency of some malicious Spirit, who is marvellously Industrious to let, and hinder us in nothing more, than in this most Glorious and Beneficial Service, of our Prayers and Praises to Almighty God.

And thus he  
binders the  
Efficacy of  
the Word.

And hence also in the *Hearing of the Word*, does he either bring a Drowsiness upon the Hearers, so that even at the very instant, we the Ambassadors of Christ are Proclaiming to sinful Men, those gracious Terms of Reconciliation sent to them by us, from the infinite Majesty of Heaven: They will even sleep all the time of its Delivery, or he will endeavour to possess their Minds with such vain, wandering and worldly Thoughts, that the Seed sown, for want of their Attention, can never take Root in their Hearts. And this not attending to, and not considering what you are about, and what you hear, is expressly affirm'd to be from Satan, *Matth. 13. 19. When any One heareth the Word, and understandeth it not*, that is, lays it not to Heart, thinks not of it, nor considers it; for so the Word Translated *Understandeth it not*, does import, *then cometh the wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his Heart.*

VI.  
The Devil  
observing the  
outward  
Wants and  
Necessities of  
Persons, he  
accordingly  
Tempt them  
by the use of  
unlawful  
Means to re-  
move those E-  
vils.

Sixthly, *The Devil observes the outward Wants and Necessities of Persons, and accordingly Tempts 'em to the use of unlawful and undue Means to remove those Evils.* Thus he dealt with our Blessed Saviour, *Matth. 4. 2, 3. And when he had Fasted Forty Days, and Forty Nights, and afterwards was an hungred, then the Tempter came to him and said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these Stones be made Bread*; that is, he would have him, out of an Impatience of waiting the ordinary Means of satisfying his Hunger, to Tempt God to Feed him Super-naturally, and by way of Miracle. And if a Man be Sick, and want present Help in lawful Means, then will the Devil Tempt such a One, to seek his Remedy by Charms and Spells, as a more short, certain, and easy way of Curing, than by Physical Medicines; and no doubt the Devil may sometimes work extraordinary Feats by these methods, the better to keep Mankind in Dependance upon himself: But it is a certain sign of want of Grace, and of none, no not the least Fear of God in them, who shall resort, in such Cases, to Persons suspected to hold Correspondence with the Devil, and shall make use of those means of Cure prescrib'd by 'em, concerning whose Operation of any such Cure, no Reason in Nature can be given, nor the Appointment of God pretended, that such Words, tho' they may be Words of Scripture, should work such Effects.

VII.  
Knowing e-  
very particu-  
lar Person's  
inward Dis-  
positions, he  
accordingly

Seventhly, *The Devil knowing every particular Persons inward Temper and Disposition, both of Body and Mind, better many times, than he himself does; he accordingly presents such Objects to the Fancy, as shall be likeliest to prevail over such a Man to commit some grievous Sin.* Thus is a Person of a melancholly Disposition, to such a One he either aggravates the matter of his Discontent, or he will present to the

Fancy

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Fancy so many frightful Objects, and will load his Mind with such a multitude of black and dismal Apprehensions; that the melancholly Wretch shall be weary of himself, and will fly from that worst of Tormentors, he thinks, his own Mind, even to the Grave, and into Destruction it self for Refuge. And hence it is, that so many miserable Wretches hang, stab, drown, or shoot themselves, being thus Tempted thereto by Satan. And hence it is, that Persons of a melancholly Temper of Mind are so apt, above others, to be troubled with Blasphemous Thoughts, tho' Persons of great Piety, and such as have all along Feared God, and kept his Commandments. Both these, and the former Apprehensions are some of those Fiery Darts of the Devil, mention'd Eph. 6. 16. cast into the Soul, at such time, when they are least able to Repel 'em; and that on purpose to disturb the poor melancholly Wretch to the highest degree, so as to do Violence to his own Nature, and to destroy himself; or to force from him Expressions most highly Dishonourable to God, and Terrible to Christian Ears to hear. But,

Eightly, The great Battery of the Devil, whereby he does storm the Innocency, and shake the Constancy of the greatest Part of Mankind, *Is his Representing to the Fancy of Men, the Conveniency of Riches, the Glory of Honours, and the Sweetness of Pleasures, thereby to Bribe 'em to Rebel against God, and to Sin against their own Souls.* VIII.

This I call his great Battery, and usually therefore he does Assault us therewith, not till all others have fail'd him. In this manner he dealt with our Saviour. When all his other Temptations prov'd ineffectual, *The Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and sheweth him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of 'em. And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me,* Matth. 4. 8, 9. But altho' the Son of God was no more to be won upon by this, than by any of the former, to comply in the least with the Designs of the wicked Tempter: Yet the Weakness of the Generality of Men is such, that they are Brib'd hereby, when nothing else can prevail, to Apostatize from God, to do Injuries to Men, and to do the greatest Abuses to their own Reason and Nature; and in short, to commit every Kind of Sin, whereby God is Dishonour'd, and they themselves shall be finally Ruin'd.

And the Manner and Cunning wherewith the Devil manages these Temptations, is extremely well worth your Notice. When he makes any Representation to our Souls of this World's Glory, he only shews us the fairest Out-side of those Things, to allure us thereby into Sin, industriously concealing all that is vain, and vexatious, and stinging therein, which would deter us from it. Thus he manag'd the matter with our Saviour, and thus he does still with us. In that World, and the Glory thereof, which he shew'd to our Blessed Lord, there was a great mixture of Confusion, and Disorder, and Crosses, and Vexations, and Troubles; but nothing of this did he represent to his View, when he offer'd it to him as a Bribe; but only gave him to see the Plenty, the Grandeur, the Beauty thereof, separated from the other ungrateful and displeasing Part: And so he deals with us. He does very lively present to Men the Advantage of Riches, how that Money commands all Things, and then stirs up their Covetous De-



fires after it, so as to get it they care not how, by Thieving, and Robbery, by Cozenage, and Extortion, and Sacrilege, or by any unlawful Arts and Methods. He does dazzle their Eyes with the Splendor and Glory of High Places, lets 'em see the Cap, and the Knee, and low Obeisances, and the servile Flatteries made to the Grandees of this World, to stir up their Ambition to wade through Seas of Blood, and to tread upon the Necks of oppressed Provinces, in order to mount those Seats of Honour. And lastly, he does very lively lay before their Eyes the Luxury and Wantonness, and seeming Ease found in sensual Pleasures, and so inflames their Lusts and Appetites after the Enjoyment of 'em: But he draws a dark shade over the deformed Part of the World, that we may not perceive those manifold Troubles, and Vexations, and Disappointments, and Punishments, attending these Things in the unlawful getting of 'em; and the never-failing Remorses and Regrets of Conscience, Amazing, and Distracting, and stinging, with a Venom more inflam'd and furious than that of Scorpions, the Souls who wickedly pursue and attain to those Things. All this dark Part he reserves till this World's Goods are so unjustly got, to work upon their Shame and Despair, in order to promote his farther Designs upon 'em, as you will see in his following Temptations.

## IX.

*As, Ninthly, When any have been once prevail'd upon by the Con-  
Having pre-venience, the Beauty, the Honour, or the Pleasure of any of these Out-  
vail'd there-ward things, which the Devil has presented to their Fancies, to commit  
by upon Per-Sin to obtain them: Then he fails not to lay the Shame and Disgrace of  
sons to com-their Sins before them, and will persuade them to commit another horrid  
mit some gre-Wickedness, to hide from the Eyes of Men the Shame of the former.  
vious Sin to Thus when he had Tempted David to commit Adultery with  
obtain them, Bathsheba, the Wife of Uriah, then must the Injur'd Husband be  
he then lays the shame and made Drunk, that his Lying with his Wife might not be Discover'd,  
Disgrace of when he return'd from the Battle; but that he and the World might  
their Sins be- think the Child Begotten was his own: And when that would not  
fore 'em, per- make Uriah go in unto his Wife, then at last he must be Murder'd,  
swading 'em by being put into the Front of the Battle, and then Treacherously  
to commit a- left to be Cut off by the Enemy, that she being freed of her for-  
nother horrid mer Husband, he might without Scandal to the Eye of the world,  
Wickedness, to Enjoy her as his own Wife. And how often do we see the like  
hide from the Device to draw Men into Sin, acted over and over at this Day, and  
Eyes of Men the shame of many lewd, ungodly Persons, after they have committed Unclean-  
the former. ness, privately to murder their own Off-spring, to prevent the  
Shame and Disgrace that will follow, the Fact being known. And  
when Children and Servants have done amiss, how commonly are  
they prompted to tell a Lye, nay, and sometimes to Swear to it,  
that it may not be discover'd? The Devil well knows that Sin  
is like laying a Train of Gun-Powder, which if you fire but One  
Corn, it will presently give Flame to all the rest: So one Sin com-  
mitted, the shame of that will engage you to commit another to  
hide the former. And therefore it is, I say, the usual Policy of Sa-  
tan, when he has Tempted any Person to commit a Wickedness,  
then to lay the Shame and Disgrace thereof so sensibly before him,  
that he shall again commit a worse, on purpose to cover the Know-  
ledge of the former from the Eyes of Men.*

And



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And then, Tenthly, When he has once Engag'd a Person into many Sins, either he will lull him into a fatal Security, whereby he foolishly persuades himself, that God will deal more mercifully with him, than he has declared in his Word; or else Satan will not fail to present at last to such an enormous Sinner's Conscience, the infinite Guilt and Horrour of his Crimes, to make him despair if he can, that ever they will be forgiven, they are so many and Monstrous: That so he may never endeavour to Repent, or so much as fly to God in Prayer, to have Mercy on him. At first he presented to the Sinner's Fancy nothing but the Beauty, the Conveniency, the Pleasure, the Glory of the Things of this World; as of the Pleasures, Riches, and the Honours of this Life, with all their Advantages, without any thing of that Sting, and Remorse, and Trouble, that must necessarily attend them, if unlawfully pursued and obtain'd. But when by this Means the Sinner has run on, without the least stop or stay, into a vast Number of *wasting Sins*, (some of them perhaps of such a Nature, that no Reparation or Restitution can be made for them, as Adultery and Murder,) Then will he pour in all of a sudden, whole Broad-sides, such an Horrour, and such an amazing sense of Guilt, into the Soul of such a Sinner, that thinking it to no purpose to Retreat, he shall push on to commit the most outrageous Villanies, till at length when Death seizes him, he goes down into Hell, desperately *Cursing the Day he was Born*, and Blaspheming that God, who gave him a Being.

And now Lastly, I shall not mention any other way, wherein Satan tempts Men, except it be when God in Punishment to some sort of Sinners, does abandon them to the Devil, to be who in a manner Ordered and Acted by him. And there are Three sorts of Sinners, that do seem to be thus abandon'd by God, and given up, some in a great measure, others wholly, to the Management of Satan.

First, Such ill-dispos'd Minds, as out of Hatred to the Ways of God, and out of Love to their own Lusts, do endeavour to possess their Minds with such Principles; and do seek such Teachers, as will make sin easy to their Consciences, and will reconcile the Hopes of Heaven, and a bad Life together. And such are in danger of being justly left, in a great measure, to the Delusion of the Devil. As to such Men, because They receive not the Love of the Truth, that they might be Saved, God does threaten to send them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lye, 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. And because the Generality of the World is so ill-dispos'd, that it cannot endure sound Doctrine, which would discover, or hinder, or gall their Consciences in their evil Practices; God does therefore most justly permit so many to be Deluded by Satan, into the most vile Principles and Practices. Hence no doubt has the Church of Rome in these latter Days, as 'twas foretold it would, 1 Tim. 4. 1. *Departed from the Faith, giving heed to Seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils*. And hence also amongst our selves do so many particular Persons, When they will not endure sound Doctrines, heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears, and do turn away their Ears from the Truth, and are turned unto Fables, 2 Tim.

4. 3, 4.

There are a Second sort of Sinners, who seem'd to be wholly abandon'd by God, and yielded up to Satan, to be Tempted by him at his Pleasure; and they are such, Who in a long Course of many

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damning many Damn-

X.

Having once Engaged a Person into many Sins, he either lulls him in security, or drives him into despair.

Lastly, there are those, whom God does in a great Measure give up to the Delusion of Satan.

Others whom he does wholly Abandon to the Power of the Devil.

I.

Such ill-dispos'd Minds, as out of love to their Lusts, seek after such Principles & Teachers, as will make sin easy to their Consciences, are justly left to the Delusion of Satan.

II.

Such as by a long Course of many damning

ing Sins have *damning Sins that lay wast the Conscience, have baffled all the Methods of laid wast the his Grace to reclaim them, and have resisted and grieved his Holy Spirit Conscience, so long, till Grace be wholly withdrawn from them:* Such are called *Children of Disobedience,* Eph. 2. 2. which in the Phrase of Scripture does signify Persons extreamly Disobedient; and of such it is said in the same Verse, that the *Evil Spirit worketh in them.* He does act them as the Soul does the Body, and does hurry them into such vicious Extravagancies, and to commit such outrageous Impieties, that they seem to be Devils Incarnate. Thus did the Devil enter into Judas, Luk. 22. 3. after he had formerly Baffled all the good Admonitions of our Saviour, to reclaim him from his Thievery, and other Villanies, and at length spur'd him on to commit the Blackest Crime, that ever was heard of, even to Betray the Lord of Life into the Hands of his Enemies. And there are many ungodly Wretches now a-days, who do seem to sin with so much Enmity and Despite against God, that it is hard to say, whether they are not Devils in Humane Shapes. But it is the same thing; they have sinn'd themselves to that Degree, that God has given them up, and the Devil seems to Animate them.

And lastly so  
are Witches,  
Magicians,  
and Conju-  
rers, who  
have Cove-  
nanted away  
both Body &  
Soul to the  
Devil, on  
Condition he  
will be for  
some time at  
their Beck, to  
execute their  
vile and ma-  
licious Pur-  
poses.

A Third sort of Persons abandon'd by God (and that utterly) to the Power and Management of Satan, to actuate them as he pleases, *Are Witches, and Magicians, or Conjurers,* such as was that Woman of whom we read, 1 Sam. 28. And these are a sort of miserable Wretches, so far forsaken of Grace, and the Fear of God, that they have expressely Covenanted away both Body and Soul to the Devil, on Condition he will be at their Beck to Execute their vile and malicious Purposes. For Envy, Malice, and Revenge seems to be the Soul, that animates these *Children of the Devil;* or else the Pride and Vanity of doing Wonders, and an insatiable Curiosity of knowing those secret Things to come, which belong to God alone to know, has put 'em upon making such a Contract with Satan. And these wretched Miscreants sure must be suppos'd to be utterly shut out from the least Glimpse of God's Favour, and cast out of his Protection, and to be wholly under the Power of the Devil. The thing is self-evident, so as not to need any Pains to make it appear. And in all Probability, they have also their Eternal Damnation seal'd in this World, *Even before they go hence, and be no more seen.*

And thus I have at length shew'd you, as before, *Who the Devil is, and what are his Works of Sin, and how you are to Renounce both him and them:* So I have now laid open before you, as fully as I could (not indulging meer Conjecture, but fetching my Discoveries from the Holy Scripture, from which alone we can learn any thing of Certainty in such a dark Subject;) I say, I have fully laid before you those manifold Methods of Temptation, whereby he did, and does still Attempt, First, The whole Race of Mankind; Secondly, The Church of Christ; Thirdly, The most Considerable and Leading Persons therein; and Lastly, Every single and individual Person indifferently amongst us.

Upon the ge-  
neral View of  
the Works of  
the Devil, and to put up a Dominion in Opposition to his, and to draw the whole



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whole Race of Mankind into the ſame Curſed Rebellion againſt the Maſteſty of Heaven, owning him, the Devil, for their Lord and Maſter.

'Tis indeed a thing almoſt incredible, that a Creature could poſſibly be guilty of ſuch impudent Pride and Ambition, as to juſtly God, as it were, out of his Throne, and to Arrogate to himſelf the Homage of all the Creatures; but yet it appears to be plainly ſo, by his Tempting even of the Son of God himſelf to Worſhip and Adore him, and in his Plying him ſo diligently with one Temptation after another, never letting him reſt, till he ſaw there was no Hopes. He perceiv'd, that his Coming into the World was to deſtroy his Kingdom, and therefore he firſt Attacks him in the Wilderneſs, thinking he had him at an Advantage, after a long Faſt of Fourty Days, and that in his Hunger he would do any thing to get Bread. And when our Saviour alledg'd his ſufficiency in God alone, without material Bread, he then takes him up into the Holy City, and ſetteth him on the Pinnacle of the Temple; bidding him, if he were ſo confident of God's Protection and Preſervation of him, to caſt himſelf down from thence, and no doubt he would order his Holy Angels to receive him. And when in that alſo he was Repuls'd, Satan try'd him farther yet, and taking him into an exceeding high Mountain, where he gave him a *Vifionary View* of all the Riches, Glory and Splendor of the World, and proffer'd him, that if he would Fall down and Worſhip him; that is, Deſert the Service of the God of Heaven, and coming over to him, would Propagate and Promote his Kingdom, and do Homage himſelf, and cauſe all others to do the like to him: This, if he would do, Satan Promis'd him all theſe things would he give him. Thus like a Politick Prince, who would Bribe with Riches, and Honours, and Preferments, the General of another's Army, to come over to him, and to Betray into his Power all his own King's Subjects: So did the Devil Tempt our Saviour, *the great Captain of our Salvation*, to Revolt himſelf from God, and to bring over the whole Church along with him. So infinitely bent is Satan upon the Diſhonour of God, and our Slavery and Ruine; which as it is enough to rouze us up to make a moſt diligent Enquiry, till we fully diſcover all the Arts and Methods, whereby he would accompliſh it: So it will, I hope, ſufficiently Juſtify my having been ſo long in laying before you, *Who the Devil is, and what are his Works*, both of Sin and Temptation.

Laſtly, And now it remains only to ſhew you, and then I ſhall have done this Point, *What it is, and how we muſt Renounce this great Work of the Devil, his Tempting of us to Sin.* The word *Renounce*, I before told you, is a Word that bears various ſignifications, according to the Nature of the Thing to be Renounced by us. And as the Devil being that Arch-Rebel againſt God, whoſe Quarrel with him is for no leſs, than Dominion and Empire over the World, who ſhall be King thereof, God, or Satan; and who, with all his Legions of Infernal Spirits are continually muſtering up all their Forces againſt the Authority of God, and drawing wretched ſinful Men into the Conſpiracy. As the Devil being ſuch, to *Renounce the Devil*, as I have told you, is to diſclaim, or leave off having any

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Hand

*both of Sin and Temptation, it does appear, his Drift is no leſs than to uſurp God's Throne, and to draw the whole Race of Mankind into the ſame Curſed Rebellion againſt the Maſteſty of Heaven, with himſelf.*

*What it is, and how we muſt renounce this great Work of the Devil, his Tempting of us to Sin.*



The Temptations of the Devil are then only properly Renounced, when they are Resisted by us.

Hand with him in his base and ungrateful Rebellion against God. And as to his Works of Sin: As by Sin God's Laws are Transgressed, his Authority thrown off, his Government disowned, and his Power defied: So to *Renounce his works of Sin*, must signify to disclaim, or abandon every Sin, as a thing most dishonourable and provoking to God, because it implies a throwing off his Authority, and a disowning his Power. As this is to *Renounce the Devil and all his works of Sin*: So as to that other great Work of his, his Temptations of us, those will properly be then only Renounced, when they are Resisted by us; a thing which we are Commanded to do, *Jam. 4. 7. Resist the Devil*; as also, *1 Pet. 5. 9. Whom Resist steadfast in the Faith*.

But how shall such weak and impotent Creatures as we are, be able to Resist such a mighty Spirit, or rather such a powerful Host of Spirits, as the Devils are? For are there not Multitudes of 'em surrounding of us, as appears by one Man's having a whole Legion of 'em cast out of him? And did not the great Fiend, the Ring-leader of 'em own to God, that it was his Employment to *Go to and fro in the Earth, and to walk up and down in it*, *Job 1. 7.* to find out such, whom with the greatest Probability of Success he may assault, and to see against what weak part of 'em, either in Body or Mind, he may most advantageously raise his Batteries? Nay, and is it not said, *1 Pet. 8. 9. That as a roaring Lion, he continually walks about the Earth, seeking whom he may devour*: So that besides his Industry and Policy, he does with the greatest Violence and Fury oftentimes set upon us? These things considered, Is it possible for us to Resist him, or is it not then in vain for us to Endeavour it? Or by what Means, you will say, shall be able to do it?

That they may be successfully Resisted.

But notwithstanding all the Multitude, the Policy, nor the Fury of Devils, we need not be Disheartened; for as we are Commanded in the fore-cited Place of *St. Jam. 4. 7. To Resist him*: So we have a Promise of being successful when we do. *Resist the Devil, and he will fly from you*: And you will be able effectually to Resist his Temptations, these Three ways.

First, *By keeping your Selves always Sober.*

Secondly, *By Watchfulness, that you may not be Ensnared by them.*

Thirdly, *By Prayer to God to Protect you from them.*

I. We must keep our selves always Sober.

I. Sobriety. As opposite to Drunkenness, a necessary Preservative against Satan's Temptations.

First, *If you will effectually Resist Satan's Temptations, you must preserve your selves always Sober*, or else you will be deprived of Reason, and the Grace of God, whereby alone you can Resist them. Thus *1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. Be Sober, because your Adversary, the Devil, as a Roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, whom Resist steadfast in the Faith*. And indeed Sobriety, as it is contrary both to Drunkenness, and Passion, is a great and most necessary Preservative against Satan's Temptations. Drunkenness is a thing that does so Overwhelm all the Powers of the Soul, that whilst a Person is in that Condition, he has little, sometimes no use of his Memory, Understanding and Judgment, so as to have any Thoughts of Good and Evil, or to discern between what is Fit and Reasonable, and what is Hurtful and Brutish. And only the Lusts and Appetites of a Man are then awake, ready to hurry him to whatsoever Extravagancies

cies he ſhall be Tempted. And do you think, that the Devil, who is ſo Cunning in Timeing his Temptations, will then be Idle, and not ſtrike in with the Seafon, and at ſuch an Opportunity preſent to the Wretch, when depriv'd of Reaſon and Grace, ſuch Baits as ſhall be likeliſt to take him? Why, this to be ſure he will; and hence we hear of ſo many Brutish Extravagancies, and ſinful Frolicks, ſo much Lewdneſs, Swearing, Robberies and Blood-ſhed, acted and committed in Drunkenneſs: ſuch great Reaſon there is, that as you would preſerve your ſelves from Sin; ſo likewiſe muſt you preſerve your ſelves ſober, and free from Drunkenneſs, otherwiſe you will be Overtaken therewith.

*And likewiſe Sober and free from Paſſion*, in which caſe Perſons are as much depriv'd of Reaſon, as in the other, and are hurry'd on to the like Commiſſions; and the Devil will be alike ready, both to Influence the Paſſion, and to ſuggeſt Provocations, if Sobriety does not ſtrike in, and moderate. Hence is the Paſſionate and Violent Tongue, ſaid to be *Set on fire of Hell*.

II.  
*As oppoſite to Paſſion.*

Secondly, *Watchfulneſs is another Means to Reſiſt Temptations.*

II.

Thus again, in order thereunto, in the ſame Place of St. Peter, 1 Ep. 5. 8, 9. it is ſaid, *Be Sober, be Vigilant*. He is Vigilant for his Part to do you Miſchief, and watches all Advantages, to get you into his Power and Reach: And it lies upon you to be as careful to Guard your ſelves againſt all his Batteries, which he Plays againſt you. He ſurrounds the Soul, and views it on all ſides: "And this great Enemy of Mankind, ſays a Father, does there lay his Snares of Deceit, where there is the greateſt Probability they will take us. He knows to whom he may beſt apply the Heats of Luſt, before whom he may ſpread the Table of Gluttony, and to whoſe View he may diſplay the Enchantments of all ſorts of Luxury. He conſiders the Temper of Men's Minds, and whom he can diſorder with Grief, and whom he may deceive with Joy, whom he can oppreſs with Fear, and whom he may ſeduce with Admiration, and into whoſe Breſt he can moſt eaſily Inſuſe the Poiſon of Envy. He examines the Cuſtoms of Men, he conſiders what are their Cares, and he ſearches which are our prevailing Affections. And by that he takes occaſion to do us the greateſt hurt, to which he ſees we are moſt violently addicted, and about which he ſees us moſt induſtriouſly Employ'd. Like an Enemy, who Beſieges a City, does always aſſault the weakeſt part of the Walls: So does he attack the Soul, where he perceives its greateſt Infirmities. Such infinite Reaſon have we to conſider our own Natures, and to keep a particular Watch on that ſide, where we are moſt Blind, and to ſet our ſelves with the greateſt Vigour to Reſiſt and Repel the Temptations, wherewith he will aſſault us there. And this is the Second way given you in Scripture to Reſiſt Satan's Temptations, *viz.* Watchfulneſs and Diligence to know our ſelves, and to diſcern his Temptations, that ſo you may not be Enſnar'd by them. The

*Watchful over thoſe our weakneſſes, eſpecially where Satan will be likeliſt to attempt us.*

Third, *Is by Prayer to God to protect you from them.* Thus Jam. 4. 8. after we are commanded to *Reſiſt the Devil, and he will Fly from us*; as an effectual way ſo to do, we are bid to *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to us*; that is, if we will make our humble

*And Thirdly, we muſt be conſtant and fervent in Prayer to*

God to pro-  
tect us from  
them.

Addressee to God by Prayer, he will be ready to assist us against all his Temptations. And indeed there is extraordinary Reason, you should diligently and earnestly Pray to God, to Protect and Preserve you from Satan's Delusions. The Devil is a Spirit, and therefore is naturally Endow'd with a great deal of Knowledge, abundance more than we Men are capable of attaining to. And moreover, by the Experience of many Thousand Years, from the Creation of the World, unto this Day, he has greatly Improv'd himself in all manner of mischievous Cunning and Subtlety; so as not to be Ignorant of any way, whereby he may most successfully prevail over us, to draw us into Sin. Both which things consider'd, we were not capable to Cope with him, if left to our selves. But our Comfort is this, That the Devil can go no farther than his Chain; and as the Divine Goodness will not permit him to attempt whom, and how he pleases: (It was not before he had Leave, that he could Tempt Job, 2. 6.) so in reference to all sorts of Temptations whatsoever, we have a most sure word of Promise, 1 Cor. 10. 13. that *God is Faithful, who will not suffer you to be Tempted above that you are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.* But then, if you would have him a Protector, always ready at Hand to assist you, you must, as was said, *Draw nigh to him, and he will draw nigh to you.*

What shall I say? Why, what farther Directions are necessary for *Resisting of Satan's Temptations*, together with an earnest Exhortation so to do, are given you in those most excellent Words of the Apostle to the Eph. 6. 10, 11, 12. with which I shall conclude. *Finally Brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might; Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high Places: Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the Evil Day, and having done all to stand: And so goes on in several Verses, shewing with what Armour you must prepare your selves, wherewith to defend your Innocency against the Assaults of Satan, viz. with Truth, or the Knowledge of the Gospel, with Righteousness, Charity, Faith, the Hope of Salvation, and the word of God: And then adds, as I before directed you, That you must Pray always, with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance.*



## T H E Fourteenth Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.**

**H**AVING already, in order to the Explication of these Words, shew'd you, *Who the Devil is, what are his Works, what is meant by Renouncing the Devil, and all his Works, and how necessary it is we should absolutely do so ;* I come now,

Secondly, In like manner to Explain unto you, *What is meant by the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and to shew you in what Sence, and how far you must Renounce the wicked World, with its Poms and Vanity.*

To Renounce the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World. There is not a word here but will require some Explication. As to the word *Renounce* indeed it may suffice, what I before told you, that it is of various Significations, according to the Nature of the Thing to be Renounc'd by us : And there being Three Things in these Words necessary to be Explain'd,

First, *The World* ; Secondly, *the wicked World* ; and Thirdly, *the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World* ; I will Expound to you the Meaning of each, and will withal shew you in what sence, and how far you are to Renounce every One of them.

And First, *I am to shew you, what is meant by the World, and in what Sence, and how far you are to Renounce the World.* The World in Scripture does generally pass under a very bad Character, and for the most part is mention'd, as what does directly oppose God's Glory, and our own Happiness. Thus Jam. 4. 4. *Know ye not that the Friendship of the World is Enmity with God, and whosoever therefore will be a Friend of the World, is an Enemy of God.* And on the contrary, Gal. 6. 16. St. Paul gives this Character of himself, *That through the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, the World is Crucified unto him, and he unto the World.* And, 1 Joh. 5. 4. it is universally declar'd, that *Whosoever is born of God, overcometh the World : And therefore in the Second Chapter of the same Epist. 15, 16. we are commanded, Not to love the World, neither the Things that are in the World, being assur'd, that If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.* And indeed, if we shall search throughout the whole Book of God, we shall find such frequent and earnest Commands to Renounce this World, and to beware of its Temptations

tations, that nothing, except Satan the Ring-leader of all our Adversaries, seems to be a more Mortal Enemy to the Happiness and Salvation of Mankind, than this *World*. And all this consider'd; as also, that it is made so material a Part of our Baptismal Covenant to *Renounce*, as the Devil, so the *World*; I think it concerns you to be well informed, what is meant both in Scripture, and your Catechism, by that *World*, which you are so oblig'd to Renounce, and in what sense, and how far you are to Renounce it.

And a more nice and critical Enquiry and State of this Matter is the rather necessary, because the World, as hardly as it is spoke of, is not absolutely, and in its own Nature Evil, as the Devil is; for consider'd in it self, it is the Creature of God, and consequently very Good, according to that Divine Testimony given thereunto, *Gen. 1. 31. God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very Good*: And it is only Evil accidentally by our Abuse of it. That therefore you may Err on neither side, neither despise the Workmanship of God's Hands, to the Disparagement of God's Goodness, in giving us of his Creatures for our Use and Convenience; nor too much Dote upon the Creature, to the Neglect of the Creator, which is a Degree of Idolatry: I will, with what Skill God shall enable me, state this whole matter to you, and shew you, *What is meant* both generally by the *World*, and in what Sense, and how far you are to Renounce it. And for the more full and compleat Explication of this Point, I will do it, both Generally and Particularly.

*It is to be consider'd both generally by the World, and in what Sense, and how far you are to Renounce it. and particularly.*

*I. By the world in general is meant that whole Frame of Nature, which we behold, and all that variety of Creatures, which it contains, and is given us by the Bounty and Goodness of God, for our Use and Benefit.*

And First as to the World in General, it is visible what is meant by it, *viz.* The whole Frame of Nature, which we behold, with whatever is contain'd therein. True it is, the World is put many times in Scripture, as *Joh. 7. 7.* and often elsewhere, to signify Evil Men, because that the Wicked make up the greatest Part of Men in this world. But this is an improper and figurative meaning of the world, Evil Men being but a part of the world, and in this Sense will better be consider'd by us under the next general Point to be spoken to, *viz.* The *wicked World*. But *Matth. 4. 8.* and in innumerable other Places of the Scriptures, by the World is meant, that whole Frame of Nature, which we behold, and all that Variety of Creatures, which it contains, and is given us by the Bounty and Goodness of God, for our Use and Benefit.

*And now the great Question will be, In what Sense, and how far we must Renounce the World, in this Sense of the Word.*

And there are not ordinary Mistakes about it; For some shall Cry out most grievously against this World, as the Author of all their Sin and Misery; and therefore many have endeavour'd to fly out of it, as it were, into Desarts, living separate from Mankind, and without the Conveniencies of Life, as the Hermits of Old; and into Cloysters and Monasteries, as the several Orders of Monks and Friars at this Day in the Church of *Rome*. But certainly the World does not

*The world in this Sense is not in it self Evil, but only accidentally, by Man's abuse of himself, or it.*

deserve to be so spitefully us'd, as the Words and Actions of Superstitious and mistaken Men do import. For to use the words of a great Man, 'The World is certainly in it self Good, and is not Evil, but accidentally by Man's Abuse of himself, or it. It doth contain a general supply of Objects answerable to the Desires of our sensible Nature, and the Exigencies and Conveniencies of it: It is a great

' a great Shop, full of all sorts of Wares, answerable to our Wants, or Conditions. There is Wealth, and Places, and Delights for the Senses; and it becomes an Enemy to us, by reason only of the Disorder and Irregularity of those Lusts and Passions, that are within us, and by reason of the Over-value, that we are apt to put upon them. They are indeed Temptations, but they are only Passive, as the wedge of Gold did Passively Tempt *Achan*, but it was his own Lust and Covetousness, that did him the Harm. The Rock doth not strike the Ship, but the Ship strikes the Rock, and breaks it self.

' Nay, this World, as it is not Evil in it self, so most certainly it is full of Goodness and Benevolence to us: It supplies our Wants; it is accommodate to the Exigencies and Conveniencies of our Nature; it furnishes us with various Objects, and Instances of the Divine Goodness, Liberality, Bounty; of his Power, and Majesty, and Glory; of his Wisdom, Providence, and Government: which are so many Instructions to teach us to Know, and Admire, and Magnify him; to walk Thankfully, Dutifully, and Obediently unto him; to teach us Resignation, Contentedness, Submission, and Dependance upon him. A good Heart will be made the better by it; and if there be Evil in it, it is such as our own corrupt Natures occasions, or brings upon it, or upon our selves by it; and it is a great Part of our Christian Warfare and Discipline to teach us to use it, as it ought to be used, and to subdue those Lusts and Corruptions that abuse it, and our selves by it. So that the World you see is not absolutely, and in it self Evil, nor is it consequently entirely to be Renounced by us: But it is in it self Good, and as such it may in due measure be desir'd and enjoy'd by us.

Nevertheless through our own Corruption, whereby we abuse these good Things of the World, which the Divine Bounty has bestowed upon us for our Support, Comfort, and Convenience, the World becomes *Accidentally the occasion of most of our Sins, and of our Estrangement from God, our sovereign Good.* And how the World does accidentally become the occasion of much Sin committed by us, and as such, how far it ought to be Renounced, I take to be a Point that is very requisite you should be well instructed in.

And the Case you must know betwixt Us and the World stands thus: Man is a Compound Being, made up of Two different and distinct Natures, a Body, and a Soul; the one purely Material and Earthly, the other Spiritual and Heavenly; the one Inferior, the other Superior in Worth and Dignity; the one Mortal and Perishing, the other Immortal and Everlasting. Hence Man is by some called *συνανης τῶν δύο κόσμων* Akin to Two Worlds, the Knot, as it were, that ties 'em both together, or the Button that fastens 'em one to another. Now Man consisting of these Two Principles, according to One whereof, and that the Principal, he is nearly ally'd to God, (for according to his Soul, he is the very Image of God) it is very reasonably requir'd of him, That he should chiefly mind Heaven, and Heavenly Things, his near and chief Relations, (if I may so say) which he is Everlastingly to enjoy; and that he should not much concern himself with the Things of this world, which he must shortly leave behind him, and then all Relation betwixt 'em will



cease. But all the time of his Pilgrimage here, Living and Con-  
 versing for the most part with the Things below, he becomes sooner  
 acquainted with them, and they with him, they have an easier Ac-  
 cess to him than Heavenly Things, and have therefore greater Op-  
 portunities to court his Affections, and to win upon 'em: So that  
 in the End it too often falls out that St. Paul's Rule is liv'd Counter  
 to, and Men generally *Set their Affections on things below, and not  
 on things above.*

*In what man-  
 ner it does  
 Captivate us,  
 and draw us  
 from God.*

The manner how the world Captivates, and Enslaves, and Draws  
 the whole Man in Triumph after it, is this; It presents to the  
 Senses Riches, Honours and Pleasures, and dazles 'em with their  
 Glory and Beauty: Men's outward Senses being so extreamly taken  
 with these, do easily bribe the Affections to love 'em above all  
 other, and cause 'em to Covet and Lust after 'em. The Affections  
 becoming hereby most eagerly desirous of 'em, do put a false Bias  
 upon the Judgment, so that our Understanding and Reason usually  
 becomes thereby so far Corrupted, as to dictate to the Will, that these  
 outward and sensible good Things, are the Objects, which are above  
 all others worthy of its Choice. And thereupon the Will does im-  
 mediately choose the present Objects of sense, the Riches, Honours  
 and Pleasures of this World, preferring 'em far before Spiritual  
 Things. And thus the whole Man, Body and Soul is made a Slave  
 to the world, and neglects Heaven, and minds not to perform the  
*Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, the way thither.*

*So far there-  
 fore as it en-  
 gages our Af-  
 fections too  
 closely to it,  
 so as to make  
 us Inordi-  
 nately, and  
 Irregularly  
 to mind it,  
 and to neglect  
 our great Con-  
 cern, the Bu-  
 siness of Re-  
 ligion, it is to  
 be Renoun-  
 ced and Re-  
 jected by us.*

So that upon the whole Matter, the world is so far only our  
 Enemy, and to be Renounced and Overcome by us, as it Engages  
 our Affections too closely to it, so as to make us *Inordinately* and  
*Irregularly* (that is, with an Affection to it, or any Thing in it, be-  
 yond its due Desert,) to mind it, and too much to neglect our great  
 Concern, the Business of Religion, and the Performance of the  
 Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, our way to Heaven and  
 Happiness. \* So long as we live in this World, and are Parts of  
 it our selves, and carry these Bodies of Earthly Materials about  
 us, there is no doubt but it is necessary for us, and we are permitted  
 to be concern'd in it, and we may without scruple gratify our selves  
 with the Enjoyments of it, provided it be in *Things lawful, and in  
 degrees allowable,* and that we suffer not our Hearts and Affections  
 to be too much fixt upon it. But in regard our Souls, the principal  
 Part of us by far, are the Natives of Heaven, and are only as  
*Pilgrims and Tenants* here Below, to stay but for a short Time:

*But being our  
 Souls, our  
 principal  
 part, are soon  
 to remove to  
 Heaven, we  
 must chiefly  
 set our  
 Affections on  
 things above,  
 and mainly  
 endeavour to  
 attain them.*

(For *As the Dust shall return to the Earth, as it was, so the Spirit  
 shall return to God, who gave it, Eccl. 12. 7.*) we must therefore  
 Set our Affections chiefly on *things above*, on God, the Society,  
 Interests, and Enjoyments of that Ever-blessed State, making it  
 our main Business to Possess, to Attain, and Enjoy them; *and not  
 on things below,* the foolish Interests and Satisfactions of this perish-  
 ing and transitory State here on Earth, Col. 3. 2. And so far  
 as the world, or any thing in it Inveigles our Hearts and Affec-  
 ti-

\* So long as we wear these Earthly Bodies about us, we are permitted the Use  
 and Enjoyment of worldly Things, provided in *Things lawful, and in Degrees  
 allowable.*

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ons to fix upon it, and seduces us to commit any Thing sinful, and hinders to mind the Business of Religion, and the Performance of the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, our way to Happiness, and everlasting Satisfaction, it is to be Renounced, Rejected, and Overcome by us: It is the Matter of a Christian's Warfare, and the subject of his Victory. And so far as this, *Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World*, 1 Joh. 5. 4. and in this sense St. Paul Professes, Gal. 6. 14. that *The world was Crucified unto him, and he unto the world*. And thus you see in General in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce the World.

But Secondly, For the more full and compleat Explication of this Point of Renouncing the world, it being a Matter wherein it concerns you to receive the most distinct Directions; I will farther consider the Particulars of which this World is made up, and will also shew you in what sense, and how far you are to Renounce each of 'em. And here it is observable, that when we come to take a nearer View of the world in its Particulars, it does not then appear as it does in the General, to have nothing in it but Good, but to contain withal a great mixture of Evil; and indeed to be in the present State thereof almost wholly made up of *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*. And both the Good and the Evil Things thereof do give us considerable Temptations to Sin.

Now the *Good Things* of this world are summ'd up under these Heads, The *Riches, Honours*, and the *Pleasures* it affords. And its *Evils* on the contrary may be reduc'd to *Poverty, Disgrace*, and those *Afflictions* of all sorts, which in innumerable ways do assail us. And there are also some Things therein of a middle Nature, as different *Callings, Conditions*, or *States* of Life, and the *Cares* of this World, which are the Appurtenances to it, and afford great matter of Temptation and Tryal to us therein: And in what Sense, and how far you are to Renounce it, with reference to each of these, I will endeavour to shew you.

And, First, *As to the Riches of this World*: These are not in themselves Hurtful, but Good, and are bestowed by the Divine Providence upon those that have 'em, to very excellent Purposes and Uses, that they may do Good therewith, and that not only in providing for their own Household, but also by Stewarding them out to the Support and Advancement of Religion and Vertue, to the Relieving the Poor and Distressed, to the Encouragement of Industry, and in many other ways which the Laws of Piety and Charity do direct. \* And those therefore on whom God has bestowed Wealth, have admirable Advantages put into their Hands, to do Good therewith, to the Comfort of others, and to lay up to themselves Treasures of *Reward* in Heaven by their good Works.

Nevertheless it was no hard Censure our Saviour pass'd upon Riches, in saying, *That a Rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 19. 23. For both Scripture, and daily Experience tells us, that Riches are a very great Temptation to manifold Sins and Offences against God, and that whether we con-

\* And those who enjoy 'em, have great Advantages of doing Good therewith, to others Comfort, and the Benefit of their own Souls.



sider Men as  
Getting, Possessing, or as  
Parting with  
or Losing of  
them.

I.  
In the over-  
eager Pursuit  
of Riches men  
do run them-  
selves into  
many griev-  
ous Sins.

As also into  
many misera-  
ble Snares, so  
as to be hard-  
ly ever able  
to disentangle  
themselves  
out of 'em.

For as Resti-  
tution is ne-  
cessary to  
Peace with  
God, so it is  
extreamly  
difficult to be  
willing, or  
able after-  
wards to  
make it.

sider Men with respect to their *Getting, Possessing, or their Parting with, or Losing of them.*

First, Consider Men in the State of getting Riches, and St. Paul tells us, *1 Tim. 6. 9. That they, who would be Rich, fall into a Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition.* And our own Experience also gives us to see, how many horrid and black Crimes, and into what miserable Snares, so as never to be able to disentangle themselves out of 'em, do Men run themselves into, by an over-eager Pursuit of Riches. A dividing betwixt God, and Mammon, is the lowest Degree of Sin, that is occasion'd hereby, which yet God will not endure, as you will find, *Matth. 6. 24.* The Neglect of Religion, and Contempt of Heavenly Things is the next. And it is not seldom we see, that Men to raise themselves Estates in this world, will not stick at Oppressing the Poor; at Cheating of Orphans and Widows; at Corrupting of Witnesses and Juries, and Forging of Evidences; and to add Impiety to Injustice, to get but a small Pittance of worldly Wealth, they will *Rob God in his Tithes and Offerings*, by Sacrilegiously detaining those Dues, which were allotted, both by the Laws of God, and Man, for the Maintenance of the Worship of God, and his Ministers; a Sin compar'd by St. Paul with Idolatry it self, *Rom. 2. 22.*

And then, as to the Temptations and Snares, into which Men, by the unjust acquiring of Riches, do often Entangle themselves, it is indeed Terrible to consider, how they do frequently thereby run themselves into such a Condition, that like a wild Beast entangled in a Net, they cannot get out. For when once Riches are got by any methods of Wrong, or Robbery, there must be an entire *Restitution* of all that has been unjustly gain'd, or ever the Man can be said to Repent, or hope to Recover the Favour of God. And yet this Restitution, after many and repeated Acts of Injustice, becomes almost Impossible to be done: For why, the *Love of Money* is so near to the Miser's Heart, that he can sooner spill the Blood thereof, than part with it. And if that, which he has Ill-got, has not Thriven with him, as seldom it does, why then he has not where-withal to Restore to every Man his own, without reducing Himself and Family to extream Beggary; which how hard a thing it is to bring himself to, and in Practice how seldom heard of, I leave it to your own Observation to Inform your selves. So that you see into what a miserable Temptation and Snare, Men do Entangle themselves by grasping after unlawful Gain. They have it not in their Will, or if in their Will, not in their Power to make *Restitution*, and yet without *Restitution* they can have no Peace with God; and therefore such at length do usually fly for Refuge from their upbraiding Consciences, if not into utter Atheism, as is usual with other great Sinners: At least-wise they'll shelter themselves under some lewd *Anti-nomian* Principles, which teach Men to *rely upon Christ*, and to *roll upon his Promises*, notwithstanding any Extortions, Oppressions, or other unrepented Sins, they may be at the same time Guilty of; for which Reason perhaps your Dealers, and Men of Business, are so apt to be found at the Feet of Fanatick Teachers. Such Temptations to Sin are Men liable to in the *Getting the Riches of this World.*

Secondly,



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Secondly, *And no less also are those subject to, who do Possess them.* II. Experience tells us, that a great Estate, is a very great Temptation to Idleness and Luxury, to Pride and Insolence, to Irreligion towards God, and a Profane, Idolatrous Trust in Riches: And in a word, to Commit the highest Offences towards God, their Neighbour, and Themselves. I say, to *Idleness and Luxury*, the former whereof is the Rust of the Mind, the latter is a Canker, that devours and destroys the Body. And how great a Temptation to Idleness and Luxury Riches are, is eminently seen in the Case of the Rich Man in the Gospel, *Luk. 12. 19.* He had no sooner got his Barns and his Coffers full, but he Sings a *Requiem* to his Soul, *Soul thou hast much Good laid up for many Years, take thine Ease, Eat, Drink, and be Merry.* And so likewise, they are a strong Temptation to *Pride and Insolence*, and that in Respect both to God, and Man. As to his Behaviour towards God, how apt is the Rich Man, in the midst of all his Successes, to *Sacrifice to his own Net, and to Burn Incense to his own Drag*, as the Prophet words it, *Hab. 1. 16.* that is, to Attribute all to his own Wit and Policy, and Conduct, exclusive of God's Providence? And then, as to his Carriage towards Men, how often do Riches make those, that have 'em, to carry themselves with a most unreasonable Haughtiness and Disrespect towards Persons of lower Fortunes, to look upon Men of little, or no Estates, as the Cattle only, and Vermin of the World, and to treat 'em as their Slaves and Vassals, as if they were not Creatures of the same Kind with themselves; and had not Souls, as Precious in God's sight, as their own? And then, as to Irreligion, and Insolence towards God: The impious Contempt of God, and of all that is Sacred, which Men in the midst of their Abundance do cast upon that Bountiful Benefactor, who *Gave 'em all things Richly to Enjoy*, cannot be more exactly describ'd than in the Case of the *Israelites*, *Deut. 32. 13, 14, 15.* *He made him ride on the high Places of the Earth, that he might eat the Increase of the Field; but Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness, then he forsook God, which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his Salvation.* But as to that Profane and Idolatrous Trust in Riches, which is so Detestable before God, this is so much the natural Effect of Wealth, that very good Men will be apt to slide into that very sinful Temper of Mind, if they do not take care. *In my Prosperity I said, I shall never be removed*, Holy *David* confesses it of himself, *Pf. 30. 6.* So great you see are the Temptations, which do also arise from the Possession of Riches. They Corrupt both Body and Mind, by Idleness and Luxury: They cause Men to Insult over their poorer Neighbours, and sometimes even God himself too, by Pride and Irreligion. And in Confidence of their Riches Men Idolatrously put their Trust in their Wealth, instead of the All-sufficient God of Heaven.

But Lastly, The great Sins of all, which Men are in danger of Committing, on the account of their Riches, are those, which are occasion'd by their *Lothness to part with*, or their *Fear of losing 'em.* By a *Lothness to part with their Riches* is all that Niggardliness, and want of Charity and Good works occasion'd, which many Rich are most guilty of, and sometimes none more so, than those, who have

II.  
And no less  
Temptations  
are those sub-  
ject to, who  
do possess 'em.

In the Pos-  
session of Ri-  
ches, Men are  
Tempted to  
the highest  
Offences a-  
gainst God,  
their Neigh-  
bour, and  
Themselves.

But Lastly,  
the great sins  
of all are oc-  
casione'd by a  
Lothness to  
part with, &  
a Fear of  
Losing 'em.

*From a loth-  
ness to part  
with Riches,  
arises Un-  
mercifulness  
to Men.*

most to spare, and who are to look upon themselves, as indeed but Principal Stewards under God, the sovereign Benefactor, and who must give an Account to him of their many Talents of Riches, how they have distributed 'em, in doing Good therewith. This was that Tenacious Temper of Mind, for which the Rich Dives will be for ever Infamous, as long as the Gospel, that is, as long as the Sun and Moon endureth; and for which he is for ever irreveribly Doom'd to Hell-Torments. He would not spare so much as the *Crumbs which fell from his Table*, to Relieve the Poor *Lazarus*, his Heart was so much set upon his Wealth.

*From the  
fear of losing  
'em, Apostacy  
from God.*

But the great Sin of all, which the Rich are in most danger of Committing, is occasion'd by their *Fear of Losing their Riches*, and is no less than an Apostacy from the Faith, and a Denial of the Truth. Our Blessed Saviour tells us, that *Whosoever he be, that forsaketh not whatever he hath for his sake, and the Gospels, he cannot be his Disciple; and to leave Houses, Lands, Possessions, and whatever worldly Enjoyments, if you will not Renounce the Gospel it self, or those Truths contain'd therein, and will not embrace Errors contrary to it, is always the hard Condition that Christians are put upon in Times of Persecution.* But how hard a Thing is it for a Rich Man to do this? A poor Wretch may be content to leave his uncomfortable Mansion, and to Resign this laborious tedious Life, in hopes of gaining Rest, and eternal Glory thereby, rather than strain his Conscience: But for a Rich Man to take a Farewel of his stately Houses, delightful Gardens, his silent Grotts, and shady Walks, his rich Furniture, goodly Farms, and his heaps of Silver; to leave these, and fly into Banishment, endure Poverty, labour with Hunger, and starve with Nakedness; all this to preserve a good Conscience: It is a *hard Saying*, a shrewd Temptation! He will be apt to desire his Settlement, may be, *on this side Jordan*, rather than he will pass over the Flood, into the Land of *Canaan*. He will be very apt to *build his Tabernacle* on this side Heaven. The Temptation is indeed Great, and many have fallen under the Power of it. Several have pass'd very shrewd Brushes in their way towards Heaven, and yet have not been able to withstand the Shock of this Temptation. We have a famous Instance of this in the Young Man in the Gospel, *Matth. 19.* This Person came to our Saviour, with a mighty Desire to know, what he should do to *Inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*, and reckon'd up a many extraordinary Acts, that he had done already in order to it, (inasmuch that in another Gospel it is recorded, our Saviour *Loved him very much*) But the Holy Jesus told him, that if he would *Be perfect, he must go and sell what he had, and give to the Poor, and he should have Treasure in Heaven*, and that he must in Poverty and Affliction come and follow him; *When the young Man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great Possessions*, says the Text, *ver. 22.* And thus you see what Temptations Riches will give you, whether you consider your selves as *Getting*, as *Possessing*; or as *Parting with*, or *Losing* of them.

*In what sence  
and how far  
Riches are to  
be Renounced* And now the great Question will be, *In what Sence, and how far you must Renounce the Riches of this World in all these respects?* And in the General I can safely tell you, that Riches are not of that Evil Nature in themselves, that you must *absolutely Renounce*, or Reject



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Reject 'em. We read of a peevish Philosopher, amongst the *Grecians*, *Crate*, who threw all his Wealth into the Sea, he would have nothing to do with it. And there are a sort of Men amongst the *Romanists*, those whom they call Begging-Friars, who Vow Poverty, and place a very great Part of their Religion in that very sinful Trade (if there be not a very great necessity for it) of Begging. But Riches are not of that Nature, that they need be so absolutely Renounced and Rejected by us. They may be Innocently enough, both Sought, Possess'd, and Retain'd. And it is only in such cases wherein you cannot, without Sin, Pursue, Possess, and Retain 'em, that you are oblig'd by your Baptismal Vow to Renounce and Reject 'em; and that is in these Cases following.

*In General, being they are not Evil in themselves, they are in Cases only to be renounced by us, wherein we cannot without Sin Pursue, Possess, or retain them.*

And First as to the *Getting of Riches*, you must not set your Heart upon 'em, so as to esteem 'em your chiefest Good and Happiness; for this is an eternal and an unalterable Rule, both in Reason and Religion, That the chiefest and most absolute Good deserves our chiefest Esteem, and choicest Affections: And that lesser Goods to be less esteem'd and lov'd. And therefore God, and Heavenly Things being our chiefest Good, and the Riches of this World being Good only by derivation from him, and that in infinitely lower Degrees, we must by no means suffer the Riches of this Life to have an equal share in our Esteem and Affections with God, and Heavenly Things. No: *Mammon* is too base a Competitor, that we should divide the Empire of our Hearts betwixt God and him; *No man can faithfully serve two Masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God, and Mammon,* says our Saviour, *Mat. 6. 24.*

*As First, Riches considered in the Getting, no Man must so put his Heart upon 'em, as to esteem 'em his chiefest Good and Happiness.*

And, You must by no means labour after the Riches of this World with immoderate Care, so as to neglect the great Duties of Religion and Devotion. *Martha*, you know, was much troubled about her Household Affairs, at a Time and Opportunity given her to hear our Saviour's Heavenly Discourses, and Divine Instructions; and our Saviour rebuked her for it, telling her, that *Mary had chosen the better Part*, in laying aside her worldly Business, to attend that more important Affair, the Enriching of her Soul, *Matth. 10. 41, 42.* And you must take care, lest you also Incurr that, and a worse Rebuke, by spending the Lord's Day, set apart by Divine Appointment, wholly to the Service of God; lest you spend it, I say, in worldly Business, and in Projects of Gain: Or indeed any Day in immoderate Carings, so as to omit either your Family, or Private Devotion. And must Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these other things shall be added unto you, in such measures, as shall be needful for you; and you must therefore after lawful Endeavours, leaving the Success to God, Take no further Thought for the Morrow, *Mat. 6. 33, 34.*

*Nor must he labour after 'em with immoderate Care, so as to neglect the great Duties of Religion & Devotion.*

But above all, in your Pursuits after this World's Wealth, You must beware of Enriching your selves by any unjust Means. This is called by the *Wise-man*, *A making hast to be Rich*, because that those, who are bent upon unlawful Gain, think plain and honest Dealing too slow a way of increasing their Substance: But he withal tells 'em, that They, who do so, shall not be Innocent, *Prov. 28. 20.* that is, shall Involve themselves in great and terrible Guilt, as has been

*Especially he must beware of Enriching himself by unjust Means.*



Particularly  
not by Sacri-  
ledge.

shew'd you. And let me tell you withal, whenever you shall come to Cast up your Accounts between God, and your own Souls, a Thorn will not prick your Flesh with half that Anguish, as the Reflection upon an Ill-gotten Estate will pierce your Consciences: So that above all things it does concern you to Renounce all false and deceitful ways of getting Riches, remembering how the Prophet pronounces a fearful *Woe to him who buildeth his House by unrighteousness, and his Chambers by wrong, that useth his Neighbours service without wages, and giveth him not for his work*, Jer. 22. 13. And especially you must beware of getting by Defrauding those, who Minister about Holy Things. The Generality of the World do now a-days seem to value no Gain like this; but as it is declar'd by the Prophet *Malachi*, 3. 8. to be the worst sort of Robbery; so it is the certain way to bring a Curse upon all a Man's Substance: As on the contrary, a very free and liberal Payment of Tythes to the full Value, will bring a certain Blessing. All which you have fully declar'd from the Eighth, to the Thirteenth Verses. So that in a word, all unlawful Gain, whether by Robbing God, or Man, you must take care of.

Whoever has  
unjustly gain-  
ed any thing  
must renounce  
it, by make-  
ing Restitu-  
tion thereof.

But if it has been your sad Misfortune to have brought such a Guilt upon your Consciences, you must then Renounce those Riches in the most proper and immediate Sence of the word, that is, by Restoring speedily to the full, and rather more than less, to all those whom you have any ways Injured, as Good *Zacheus* did: *Behold Lord, if I have taken any thing from any man by false Accusation, that is, Wrongfully, I here restore him Four-fold*, Luk. 19. 8. Thus far you must Renounce the Riches of this World, with respect to the Getting of them.

II.  
Riches con-  
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Possession, are  
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uses.

Secondly, *Riches consider'd in the Possession, are to be renounced by paring off those Superfluities, which tempt to Idleness and Luxury, to Pride and Insolence, and an Idolatrous Trust in Riches; by paring off that Super-abundance, I say, and bestowing it to Pious and Charitable uses.* Idleness is a Life, for which no Man Living can give an account to God, or Man, there being no Man so Great, or so Rich, as that he can pretend to have been Born to live Idly, and to be exempt from that Use and Service, which every Person owes both to Church and State, as he is a Member of both those Bodies. *The Eye cannot say unto the Hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the Head to the Feet, I have no need of you; God having so temper'd the Body together, that all the Members, both Comely and Uncomely, Honourable and Dishonourable Parts, should have the same Care one of another*, 1 Cor. 12. 21. 24, 25. And as Idleness, so is Luxury a Crying Sin, as will appear by considering the fearful Doom pronounc'd by St. *James* to such Rich Ones, as wanton it in nothing but Pleasure. *Go to now ye Rich men, weep and howl for your Miseries that shall come upon you, ye have lived in pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your Hearts as in a day of Slaughter*, Jam. 5. 1. 5.

And as to Pride, For any Person, be he never so Wealthy, to be puff up by his Estate, to carry it Proudly and Insolently towards other Men of lower Fortunes; (the usual Effect of Riches) this also is a thing severely Threaten'd in the now cited place of St. *James*, viz. Chap. 5. ver. 1. 5, 6.

But

#### Leſt. XIV. Concerning the Temptations of the World.

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But as to that Exalting themſelves againſt God, in an utter Deſiance of his Laws, which ſo many Rich and Great Men are ſubject to, *Who, when God has fed them to the full, do then commit Adultery, and aſſemble themſelves by Troops in the Harlots houſes, and are as fed Horſes in the Morning, every One Neighing after his Neighbour's Wife; ſhall I not Viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord, ſhall not my Soul be Avenged on ſuch a People as this?* Says God by his Prophet Jeremy 5. 7, 8, 9. Sure ſuch an insolent Contempt of God's Laws, and haughty Pride againſt him, will moſt terribly provoke his Indignation at the laſt. And ſo,

Laſtly, will a Profane and Idolatrous Truſt in Riches, to which the wealthy Ones are ſo extreamly liable. *God ſhall likewiſe deſtroy thee for ever,* ſays the Pfalmiſt, *Pſal. 52. 5. He ſhall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy Dwelling-place, and root thee out of the Land of the Living.* And who is this that he will ſerve ſo? *Lo the Man that made not God his Strength, but Truſted in the Abundance of his Riches, and ſtrengthen'd himſelf in his Substance,* ver. 7. The Reaſon wherefore Men do ſo much Covet after, and ſo cloſely Hug their Riches, is becauſe they take 'em to be a ſure Security againſt all Miſfortunes and Troubles, and will be a Refuge to 'em, they think, in the Days of Calamity. But alas! There is nothing more Uncertain, and indeed more Dangerous to the Owners thereof, than Riches. They can neither Fence off Death, nor Sufferings, but do moſt uſually bring on both, and that both from the Reaſon of the thing, as they Excite the Envy, and are a Bait to the Covetouſneſs of others to Diſpoſſeſs him, who Enjoys 'em; and by the juſt Judgment of God, when Men have unlawfully got, or abus'd 'em.

And now all this conſider'd, ſince Idleneſs and Luxury, Pride and Insolence, and a Truſt in Riches, are ſo highly Provoking to God; and ſince the Rich are ſo extreamly liable to theſe, of all others: The Poſſeſſors of great Eſtates would do well and wiſely too, ſo far to Renounce 'em, as to Pare off thoſe Superfluities in their Fortunes, and to beſtow all that to Pious and Charitable Uſes, which Tempt 'em to ſuch Pernicious Vices. Nor is this a more hard and unreaſonable Leſſon, than what was given by our Saviour in a like Caſe. *Matth. 5. 29. ſays he, If thy right Eye offend thee pluck out, and caſt it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that One of thy Members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole Body ſhould be caſt into Hell.* And ſo we may ſay in this. If Superfluity and Abundance, and more than is neceſſary, to provide a Perſon of thoſe Conveniencies, which are requiſite to that State and Condition, wherein Providence has Plac'd him in the World, does directly tend to thoſe Vices now nam'd; then it is much better, that with *Crates* he ſhould even throw away that Superfluity: For much better it is, that his worldly Wealth ſhould ſink into the Bottom of the Sea, than that it ſhould ſink him, both Body and Soul, in Hell: But there is no Neceſſity for any Man to throw that away, which God has beſtow'd upon him for better Uſes. Take care to do Good therewith, and then it will Open unto you the Gates of Heaven. In ſo doing you will Renounce thoſe Superfluities of an Eſtate, as to your own proper Uſe, but however it will return into your own Boſoms at laſt, with infinite Advantage and Intereſt. Which brings me in the

And lastly,  
by suffering  
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Last Place to shew you, *How far the Rich are to Renounce their Wealth, in Parting with it in Works of Mercy, and in suffering the Loss thereof, rather than Incur Apostacy.* And to give you my Sence thereof in a few words. God, true it is, does not always make it the Condition of a Disciple to *Sell all that he hath, and to give it to the Poor*, as he Commanded him in the Gospel, upon an extraordinary Occasion. Nor does he always put us upon the fiery Tryal, either to leave all, or preserve a good Conscience. But however, there is doubtless requir'd a better Use to be made of Riches, and larger Distributions of what God hath Blest them withal, to Pious and Charitable Uses, than most of our Rich Ones do commonly think. And it is also requir'd, that tho' we are not always put to the actual Tryal, whether we will follow Christ in the Adherence to Truth, and by Renouncing of Error, or retain our Riches: Yet it is ever requir'd, that we should be readily dispos'd to *Forfake all, and follow Christ*, suppose there were Occasion, which must be the Import of these words, *Mat. 16. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.* Every One is not actually call'd to take up the Cross, by abandoning his worldly Possessions, or in any other way; but the Meaning must be, that every Disciple must let this World's Goods hang very loose about him, so that he could easily put 'em off, when call'd to it. And God, who searches the Heart, and tries the Reins, sees whether we are so dispos'd, or no. And, tho' he puts us not to the actual Tryal, he will however Judge us, accordingly as he sees we are actually dispos'd. And let this suffice for the present, whereby you have seen, how far we must Renounce the World in general, and also in that particular Instance of its Goods, the Riches thereof. There are several other Ingredients of which this World does consist, and in what Sence, and how far you must Renounce them, shall also, God willing, be shew'd you. But of this the next Opportunity.

THE



T H E

# Fifteenth Lecture.

first, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Pomps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.

**T**HE Point that we are now upon, is to lay before you the Strength of those Temptations, which do arise from the World in General, and the several Things therein contain'd in Particular, whether they be the Goods, or the Evils thereof, or such as are of a *middle Nature*; and to shew you in what Sence, and how far you are to Renounce 'em. And as to such Considerations, which concern the World in general, and also that first and principal of its Materials, the *Riches* thereof, and which are necessary to be laid before you: This I have already done, and now I am to pass on to the Consideration of

A Second of its Particulars, viz. *The Honours thereof, and to shew you what they mean, and in what Sence, and how far you are to Renounce the Honours of this World.*

Honour is accounted one of the Principal of this World's Goods; and tho' it be much supported by Wealth and Riches, yet it is often, and sometimes deservedly, prefer'd before 'em. And Honour properly and strictly does signify an inward Esteem bore to a Person, upon the account of some worthy Accomplishments and Advantages he is posselt of; and this inward Sence of his Worth, testified by some outward and suitable Respects, exprest either by our Carriage towards him, or by our Speeches to, or concerning him. This is what Honour does strictly signify: But in the more general and usual Meaning of the Thing, both in Scripture, and common Language, by Honours are also meant the Advantages, or Qualities themselves, upon the account of which Persons are so Honour'd, and Esteem'd, and Respected; and those outward Respects given 'em upon the account of those Advantages.

And they may be reduc'd to these following; *Nobility, or Gentility, Preeminence, or Authority*, and Dignities and Promotions, which are call'd Posts of Honour: Also an *High Esteem and Reputation* amongst Judicious, Wise, and Good Men, upon the account of a Person's Wisdom and Vertue, or some worthy and glorious Action perform'd by him: Or, the *Vulgar Applause* of the Croud of Men, upon what they account Praise-worthy and Honourable: And lastly, the *Outward Expressions of Respect, either by Word, or Deed*, usually given upon the account of any of these. I shall consider all these

*What is meant by the Honours of this World, in what sence, and how far they are to be Renounced.*

*What is meant by Honour properly and strictly.*

*What in the General Meaning of the Word.*

Kinds of Honour apart, and allowing to Persons, who any-wise deserve Honour, all that is consistent with Innocency, I will shew in what Sence, and how far they are to Renounce it, as it Tempts 'em to Sin against God, and to Trample under Foot his Authority and Laws.

I. And First as to *Nobility, or Gentility*: This is an Honour derived down upon Persons from their Fore-fathers, who are suppos'd to have Ennobled their Names and Families by some excellent Atchievements in Peace, or War, either in Learning, Arts, or Arms, or whatever worthy Performances, whereby they have signally Benefited their Country; and who, upon that account, have been distinguish'd by certain Badges and Titles of Honour, from the Croud of Men, whose Ancestors have not been so eminently Famous and Deserving. And such Honour as this is highly agreeable both to Scripture, and Reason. In the Scriptures we do not only find the *Princes of Israel, Heads of the Houses of their Fathers, who were the Princes of the Tribes, and were over them*, Numb. 7. 2. but also that they bore several *Coats of Arms* for Distinction, which what they were, you may see Gen. 49. And in Reason there is as great a Necessity, that there should be a Distinction of *Members*, more or less Honourable in the Body Politick, as in the Natural, and therefore in both, *Upon some Members we bestow more abundant Honour*, 1 Cor. 12. 23. And indeed such a Distinction of Persons upon the account of their Merit, or Desert of their Families, does serve to raise the Emulation of Men, to Atchieve some noble and worthy Enterprize, and to shake off that Sloth, which would otherwise Enfeeble their Activity. And for this reason it is, that God has Planted this Passion of Emulation in Persons Natures, to rouse 'em up to Imitate the noble Vertues, and great Examples of Others, that they likewise might Transmit a Name worthy to be Imitated in future Generations. Such is the *Original and Nature of True Nobility*, and so Reasonable and Useful it is in it self.

*The Abuses it is subject to, and in what Instances to be Renounced.* But as the best Things are liable to the worst Abuses; so it fares with this sort of Honour. And the Noble-man, or Gentleman is apt to think himself Priviledg'd above others, to trample under Foot all Laws, both Divine and Humane; and to reckon himself above Reproof or Punishment, when he has done; to despise and oppress the rest of Mankind, as if they were but a lower Rank of Creatures, and had not Souls as excellent in their Natures, and as capable of Improvements; as precious in God's sight, and as much the Heirs of Heaven, as his own: Such are apt to fly at the greatest Distance from those worthy Vertues, which Ennobled their Ancestors; and indeed to despise Religion, and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath 'em.

I. But, First, *A Nobleman, or Gentleman, be he of what Rank or Quality soever, must utterly Renounce all that Honour, which pretends to put him above the Laws of God, or Man, and beyond Reproof or Punishment, when he has Violated either.* For so far is One of an Eminent Quality, from being at liberty to be an Atheist, or Libertine, a Licentious, and a lewd Liver, a breaker of the Laws of his Country, and a despiser of the Discipline and Orders of the Church; and so far is he from being above Punishment or Reproof for such like Violations,

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Violations, that he is Bound, above all other Men, to be a strict and orderly Liver; and upon his Failure, is more open to Reproof, and more liable to be severely Punisht: Such a one is plac'd upon a higher Form than other Men, and consequently his Deformities and Vices are more open to publick View, and more easily discern'd; and the Multitude, which are always apt to observe the Faults of their Superiors, will be sure to pass their usual Censure, *How unbecoming is this Man's Life to his Birth and Quality, and how does he be disgrate himself and Family?* So Injurious is he to himself. He is moreover by the Eminence of his Birth and Quality, as *A Light put, not under a Busbel, but on a Candlestick*, and so the World, who are always apt to imitate the Manners of their Superiors, seeing his bad Example, will many of them Copy it out to their own Destruction; so Mischievous is such a One amongst Men. And lastly, he has receiv'd far greater *Talents* from God, than other Men, to employ to his Glory, which he has abus'd to his Dishonour, he is ungrateful towards God. He has had the Examples of more noble Progenitors before his Eyes, to raise his Emulation; he has had the Advantages of a better Education, to improve his Knowledge; he has more Time and Leisure to pursue it, more Riches to procure the Means of Attaining it; he has more Authority to support Religion, and the Church, and he has a greater stock of Reputation amongst Men, to Countenance both. And having thus a greater share of Talents to employ to his Master's Honour, proportionably a greater Measure of Improvement thereof, to the Advancement of God's Glory and Religion amongst Men, will be requir'd at his Hands; *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*, Luk. 12. 48. And now does any Man think when he has so much Abus'd himself, and Family, when his Example has been so Mischievous and Infectious to Mankind, and when he has turn'd all the Artillery, which God has given him to fight against Sin, and the Devil, when he has Treacherously turn'd it upon God himself, will his Honour bear him out in this? Or does he think himself above the Reproof of God's Ministers here, or the Punishment of an Incens'd Deity hereafter? No: He is the Man to whom Reproof does particularly belong, and accordingly *Herod the Tetrarch was reprov'd by John the Baptist, for Herodias, his Brother Philip's Wife, and for the Evils, which Herod had done*, Luk. 3. 19. And in the World to come, such a One, above all Men, will be *Beaten with many Stripes*, Luk. 12. 47. So much is that Honour to be Renounc'd, which pretends to put a Man above the Laws of God, or Man, or beyond Reproof or Punishment for the Violation of 'em.

*pretends to place him above the laws of God, or Man, and beyond Reproof or Punishment, when he has Violated either.*

*Such a One is bound above others to be a strict and orderly Liver, and upon his Failure, is more open to Reproof, and more liable to be severely Punisht.*

Secondly, And so likewise is that to be Renounced and Detested, which exalts Persons above their Brethren, to that degree, as to despise and oppress the rest of Mankind, as if they were but a lower Rank of Creatures, and had not the same God to their Father, Bodies formed out of the same Clay, and Souls as excellent in their Natures, and as capable of Improvements; as precious in God's sight, and as much the Heirs of Heaven, as their own. This is indeed observ'd to be, for the most part, the Property of those only of *Upstart Quality*; for whether it be, that such are Transported above themselves, by a sudden Rise

II.  
*As also that which exalts Persons above their Brethren to that degree, as to despise and oppress the rest of Man-*



kind, as if of Fortune, so as not to know their mean Beginning; or whether they were but it be, that their Fathers being rais'd to their Greatness, meerly by a lower Rank Vertue of their successful Fortunes in the World, not for any noble of Creatures, and worthy Performances, these have not that Vein of Magnanimity, Largeness of Soul, Generosity, Courtesy, and Liberality, and had not the same God running in the Blood, as it were, of some Families, whose Nobility was founded in some noble Exploits of Vertue: Whatever to their Father, Bodies may be the reason, it is generally observ'd, that your New Gentry Formed out are apt, above others, to carry it with an unreasonable Haughtiness and Disrespect towards their poorer Brethren. But alas! of the same Clay, & Souls There is no Ground in the World for this Distance, nor that Slavery as Excellent in their Natures, and as capable of Improvements; they put 'em to. *Have we not one Father, and hath not one God made us,* Mal. 2. 10. And was it not out of the same Lump of Clay, that this *Earthly Tabernacle of ours shall be dissolved*, who shall be able to distinguish betwixt the Dust of Princes, and their meanest Vassals? as precious in Gods sight, and as much And is not the Soul of the poorest Indian Slave, as Spiritual and the Heirs of Immortal, as that of the Richest Merchant in Europe? And had Heaven, as it but the Education, which our Europeans have, it is capable of their own. receiving as clear Notions of God, and of Religion, and of Vertue, as any of us all. And no doubt, were it adorn'd therewith, and so had the Image of God consisting in these Graces, restor'd within it, it would be as Precious and Dear to him, and be receiv'd into those Mansions of Bliss, from which, those proud Tyrants over their Fellow-Creatures Liberty, will certainly be Excluded, if they continue to treat 'em with such Distance and Slavery. Sure I am, the Poor *Lazarus* is now in *Abraham's Bosom*, when the Rich and Noble *Dives*, who treated him not with that Respect and Kindness, as he did his Dogs, is scorching in the Flames of Hell. All which consider'd, it does become the highest in Birth and Quality, to carry it with all due Humility and Courtesy to the lowest, and to Renounce and Abandon those Thoughts of Honour and Quality, which thrust away their Fellow-Servants to the same God, so far off 'em, tho' they may not have the Pretence of the Pharisee for so doing, nor can say to 'em, *Come not near me, I am Holier than thou.*

III.  
Such ought  
even to Renounce all  
Pretensions to  
Honour, who  
have degenerated from  
those worthy  
Qualities,  
which Ennobled their  
Ancestors.

But, Thirdly, *Those Persons ought indeed, even to renounce all Pretensions to Honour, who have degenerated from those worthy Qualities, which Ennobled their Ancestors.* The true Nobility of those, who are really of Birth, or Quality, was founded, as I have told you, in the Heroick and extraordinary Vertues of their Ancestors; and therefore their *Quality* cannot be suppos'd to remain with 'em, when those Vertues, which gave Being to it, are departed from 'em. But so it is, that none are half so apt to Pride themselves in their Families, and to talk so much of their Pedigree, as those who have the least of any true Worth remaining in 'em: And sure, it is a sign they have but little of their own, who do so much value themselves upon others Deservings; and seem to have nothing to Brag of, but borrowed Titles. *We have Abraham to our Father*, was the constant Cry of the *Jews*, when they had least of the Faith and Vertues of *Abraham*. However, as apt as such are to assume this Honour to themselves, there is no reason in the World, but what was purchas'd by the Merits of others, should be forfeited by their ill Deserts

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ferits, and that Vice should lose, what Vertue did gain. And this our Saviour and his Apostles did determine in the Case of those Jews; *Think not to say within your Hearts, we have Abraham to our Father, for I say unto you, that God is able of these Stones, to raise up Children to Abraham,* Matth. 3. 9. that is, by having degenerated from Abraham, you have forfeited your Title to the Name and Honour of being Abraham's Children, and the vile Gentiles, as you account 'em, shall be taken into that Dignity and Relation: *For he is the Father of all them that Believe, tho' they be not of the Circumcision.* And accordingly in a true Estimation of Things, all those, and those only are Honourable, who are Vertuous, tho' they cannot derive their Pedigree from noble Ancestors. The Honour of my House beginneth with me, and the Honour of thine, endeth with thee, said a worthy Commander, in *Plutarch*, to a Banisht Wretch, who upbraided him with the meanness of his Parentage.

Lastly, *And such ought also, even to Renounce all Pretensions to Honour, amongst Christians at leastwise, who despise Religion and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath them.* And yet those are the Persons, who take themselves to be the only Men of Honour, who can talk most Atheistically and Profanely, whose Life and Conversation is made up of Lewdness and Debauchery; and as to those grand distinguishing Graces of Christianity, Humility, Meekness, and a patient Enduring of Injuries and Affronts, who count them a meer Jest, which Men of Quality and Honour, it is impossible, should submit to. But be it so, only let 'em withal consider, that *Not many Mighty, not many Noble were called; but the base things of the World, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are,* 1 Cor. 1. 26. 28. And what then signifies their Honour, when God despises it?

But really it is not so, that your profligate and lewd Livers, be their Birth, or Quality never so Great, are Honour'd and Respected amongst Men; for whilst they continue in a mean and vile Slavery to their basest Lusts, they are not only in truth and reallity miserable and wretched Caitiffs: But whatever they think of themselves, they are indeed in the Eyes of others most Hateful and Contemprable. True it is, the greatest Part of Men (and Pity it is, that so many amongst Christians should still remain so Carnally minded) do look upon the Man, who will not revenge an Affront, to be mean Spirited, and scarcely a Gentleman; and the desperate Duellist is the more Honourable and Heroick in the Eye of the World: Yet those who are thoroughly season'd with Religion, and Wisdom's Dictates, have other Thoughts and Apprehensions of such a One, and count him the only Person of true Courage, and of a great Soul, who can despise the vain Opinions of the Croud, in the Pursuit of real Vertue. And above all, the Meek and Forgiving Christian, has this Honour, that he has an easy Access to the Throne of God, can come into his Prefence with Confidence and Assurance; whilst the other, tho' the Greatest Man on Earth for Quality, dares not Approach him, without Trembling and Horror. And yet if vain Men will give the Honour here to those, who are most Contemprable in the sight of God, (it is very unfit it should be so amongst Christians) however let the Humble and

*This the Determination of our Saviour, and his Apostles, in their Case.*

*Lastly, and such ought to Renounce all Pretensions to Honour, amongst Christians at leastwise, who despise Religion and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath 'em.*

*But if such are accounted Meek Honourable*



*by vain Men,* Meek content himself with this, That here on Earth he has the  
*they are des-* Approbation and Esteem of all Wise and Good Men, and shall receive  
*picable in the* in Heaven, from the unerring Judgment of God, a Testimony be-  
*Eyes both of* fore the whole Quire of Saints and Angels, to his Infinite and Eter-  
*God, and of* nal Honour and Glory; a Testimony, I say, which will far Exalt  
*all Wise and* him above the Highest of Mortal Men, who consider their own  
*Good Men.* Quality, more than God's Glory, and prefer an empty Notion of  
Honour, before the real and substantial Graces of God's Spirit.

*The Summ* In a word, and to summ up what has been spoke to this Point,  
*how far Pa-* *Paternal Honour* is indeed in it self Useful and Valuable, as it puts  
*ternal Ho-* before Men's Eyes the worthy Deeds of their Ancestors, and as it  
*nour is to be* Inspires 'em to an Imitation of 'em in the most excellent and noble  
*Renounced.* Instances, and Strains of Vertue. But so far as Men's Opinion of  
their Birth, or Quality, pretends to put 'em above the Laws of God,  
or Man, and beyond Reproof, or Punishment, when they have vio-  
lated either; and when it Exalts 'em above their Brethren, to that  
Degree, as to despise and oppress the rest of Mankind, as if in re-  
spect of themselves, they were no better than Brute Creatures:  
These are no other than meer *Paganish and Heathenish Notions of*  
*Honour*, and must be Renounced and Detested by every Christian.  
And indeed those ought, even to Renounce all Pretensions to any  
Honour, who have basely degenerated from those noble and ver-  
tuous Qualities, which Ennobled their Ancestors, and did constitute  
them Honourable. But especially such ought to Renounce all Pre-  
tensions to Honour, amongst Christians at least-wise, who despise  
Religion, and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath 'em. So  
that thus you have at length seen, in what Sence, and how far  
*Paternal Honour* is to be Renounced, that Honour which is derived  
upon Persons, from their Forefathers by Nature.

II. Secondly, And now I am in like manner to consider *Civil Ho-*  
*In what sence,* *nour*, that which is derived upon Persons, from the Fathers of their  
*and how far* Country, or those who have the supreme Power and Authority in  
*Civil Honour* a Land, and are next under God, the sole Fountain of this sort of  
*is to be Re-* Honour. And it is either that, which is the Cause of farther Ho-  
*nounced;* nours, viz. *The Favour of Princes*; or the Honours themselves,  
*whether the* which they Confer'd upon Persons deserving their Favours, as  
*Favour of* *Pre-eminence and Authority, Dignities and Promotions*, which are  
*Princes, or* usually call'd *Posts of Honour*: As also those *Titles and Distinctions*,  
*the Effects of* which do commonly accompany, and go along therewith, and are  
*their Favour,* the Effect of Princes Favours.  
*Posts of Ho-*  
*nour.*

Now as to both these, there is no doubt, but in themselves they  
are Good and Useful, and may be very Advantageous to the Pur-  
poses of Religion; for the more a Man is in his *Princes Favour*,  
and the greater is his Authority and Trust; the more he is supported  
with Power and Pre-eminence, and the greater Figure he makes  
in the World, the more capable he shall be of protecting true Re-  
ligion, of rewarding and encouraging Piety and Vertue, and  
of discountenancing and casheering Wickedness and Vice, as was  
seen in the Favour of *Hester and Mordecai*, with King *Ahasuerus*,  
Hest. 8. But then except the Mind be first well season'd with Prin-  
ciples of Religion and Vertue, and ballasted with Humility, Princes  
Favours, High Places, Precedences and Titles give great Tem-  
ptations



tations to several Sins, and that both in the Getting, Possessing, and Losing thereof.

These kind of Honours; and outward Glories, are dazling and bewitching Things; they draw the Eyes of whole Crouds upon 'em, gazing, and admiring, and almost adoring those, who are Invested with 'em. They bring many humble Petitioners to wait upon 'em; and these are the Men, who keep the World in subjection and awe under 'em. And therefore in obtaining a Prince's Favour, many are tempted to the grossest Flattery; in keeping it to the most servile and sinful Compliances; and rather than lose it, to Sacrifice Innocence, and a good Conscience. And as to the Honours themselves, the Glory thereof Tempts some to grasp after 'em, who have no Abilities, nor Skill to manage 'em; the Denial often causes those, who have real Abilities, but know it too well, to turn *Male-contented* and *Mutineers* to the Shocking many times of Church and State. And most Men are tempted to aspire after 'em, meerly to serve their own Private Ends; not the Publick Good, by 'em: And lastly, to compass and purchase 'em by most indirect and unlawful Means. In the Possession of 'em, Persons are apt to grow Proud and Imperious, Unjust and Cruel, and at the best shall be much diverted from minding the great Business of their Souls. And lastly, the hazard of losing 'em are dangerous Temptations to many to *Obey Man, rather than God*, that they may still Retain 'em.

But First, as to a *Prince's Favour*, tho' it is extremely Valuable when it can be had without Sin; and Princes ought to be Applied to, and Courted for the Favours Men expect from 'em, and must be held in the greatest Veneration, as the Vicegerents of God upon Earth by 'em; and no Wise, nor Good Man will forfeit, without necessity, the Esteem of 'em: Yet no Man must wind himself into their Affections, by flattering of their Vices, none must Obey their unlawful Commands, as the Duty of his Place, nor must any, for fear of incurring their Displeasure, choose rather to displease God. There are several Instances in the Scripture of Good and Wise Men, which shew you how, and in what Case it is necessary for Men, so far to deny themselves, as to Renounce their Favours, amongst which, take that of *John the Baptist*, instead of many. This *Just and Holy man* was much in the Esteem and Favour of *Herod*, who *Observed him, and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly*, Mar. 6. 20. Nevertheless this Holy Man was so far from flattering of him, that he did not stick to Reprove him for his Incest, and for all the Evils he had done, Luk. 3. 19. tho' to the Loss of that Prince's Favour, and his own Life, Mar. 6. 27.

Secondly, Proceed we next to consider, what is necessary to be done with respect to the Effect of Prince's Favours, those, *Honourable Posts*, the *Pre-eminence* and *Authority*, the *Dignities* and *Promotions*, to which they do Advance those, whom they Favour; and those *Titles of Honour and Distinction*, which do usually go along therewith; and in the Obtaining of these Posts of Honour, and Places of Trust and Power.

First, *There must be no Grasping at that, which is above a Man's Capacities and Abilities to manage to the Publick Good.* For any Person out of a vain Opinion he has conceived of his own Parts and Abilities

*these, no Man must grasp at that, which is above his Capacities and Abilities to manage to the Publick Good.* bilities, to undertake Business he is not able to Perform, and to meddle in things he does not understand, is a great Injury both to himself, and others; to himself, in exposing his own Insufficiency, which in a lower Station would have lain hid, and never been Censur'd, nor Reproacht. He does injure others thereby in perverting Judgment and Justice, through his Unskilfulness, in not dispatching Men with quickness and dexterity in their Lawful occasions and Business, and by keeping out those, who would discharge

*This Mischievous to the State.* the Duties of such Offices and Places, much more to the Benefit and Satisfaction of the Publick.

*This Mischievous to the Church.* But this Ambitious and Pragmatical Humour of *Climbing* where they are not Call'd, is most of all mischievous to the Church, when Persons undertake to be Teachers of others, who have not Learnt themselves; such were those of whom St. Paul speaks, *Who desired to be Teachers of the Law, when they understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed,* 1 Tim. 1. 7. And such were some great Pretenders to Illumination and Knowledge in the Apostles Time, of whom St. Peter complains thus, *These are Wells without water, Clouds carried by a Tempest,* viz. From one dangerous Error to another, by every Wind of Doctrine, as Clouds are from one place to another, by a tempestuous Wind, 2 Pet. 2. 17.

But the Psalmist was far from this pragmatical and meddling Temper, Psal. 131. 1. *Lord, my Heart is not haughty, nor mine Eyes lofty, neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or things too high for me.* Much less does it become others to be so; but all must so far Renounce (as great as is the Temptation) the most Honourable Posts, as to decline and refuse those they are not able to manage to the Satisfaction of their own Consciences, and the Publick Weal. And it would be happy for the World if all would do so.

But above all, this Modesty in declining those Undertakings they are not fitted for, becomes the Laity, with respect to their Teaching of others, whom it does not become *To think more highly of themselves, than they ought to think* (as they do who set up for Teachers, who had not an Education for that Purpose) *but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every Man the measure of Faith,* Rom. 12. 3.

*Nor Secondly ought Persons of the best Capacities and Abilities, must not be over-eager and importunate in their Suits and Applications to those, who bestow them; but having modestly made their Court to their Superiors, must contentedly receive their Denial.* Secondly, And in the obtaining of these Posts of Honour and Power, *Persons of the best Capacities and Abilities, must not be over-eager and importunate in their Suits and Applications to those, who bestow them; but having modestly made their Court to their Superiors, must contentedly receive their Denial.* It is the Ambition of Great Men, striving with one another for the highest Places of Trust and Power in the Common-wealth, that causes Factions, and Civil Wars, to the Destruction of their Native Country. And it is the Pride of some, who over-valuing their own Abilities and Parts, and thinking they are Injur'd, in not being Prefer'd to the highest Dignities and Promotions in the Church, has caused those Schisms and Separations in it; such choosing rather to be Ring-leaders of a Party, than Subject to, and Dependant on any. But tho' these publick Posts in Church, or State may be modestly sought by those, who are able to weild 'em, and need not be renounc'd and declin'd by Men of Parts and Abilities, when duly call'd thereto:

Yet

Yet none of the greatest Capacities ought violently to thrust themselves into 'em, to the Disturbance of Church, or State, *Lest they perish in the Gain-saying of Korah*, who with his Companions, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, unduly and factiously seeking the Priesthood, *Numb. 16. 10.* Provok'd God in so fearful a manner, that *The Earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their Houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their Goods*, ver. 32. The Consequences and Effects of Faction and Schism, are so very bad, that it is not to be wonder'd, God should so remarkably Punish it, as he did, to the Example of Others.

"Wherefore a Person of the best Capacities and Abilities, if after some reasonable Expectations, and a modest Importunity, he cannot yet hope to prevail, he must submit to Authority and Order, acknowledge God's Providence in it, possess his Soul in patience, and think that for some secret Corruption in himself, or for some other just Cause, God is pleas'd that he should not at all, or not yet succeed in his Suit. So that thus you see, how in the Pursuit of Civil Honour, as High Places, and Posts of Honour, and Authority, Dignities, and Promotions, that no Man must grasp at those, which he has not Abilities, or Skill to manage; nor must Persons of greatest Abilities turn Male-contented and Mutineers against the Government, in Church, or State, when defeated in their Aims: But as they may modestly endeavour their own Advancement, so they must contentedly receive a Denial, when for Reasons, best known to their Superiors, they are put by their Pretensions. And this is all that is proper for me to speak as to the *Renouncing* of this sort of Honour; it being not my Business to *Catechize* my Governours, but rather to *Instruct* you, that you may be obedient both to God, and Them. To proceed then,

Thirdly, *There is another sort of Honour, consisting in the high Esteem and Reputation, on which the wise and vertuous Part of Mankind have of a Person, occasion'd by the excellent Qualities, and Divine Graces shining in him, or upon the account of some extraordinary Actions performed by him.* And this indeed is a Subject, which it concerns all of you to have well stated to you, there being no Christian but has, or ought to have a good Reputation, for his good and excellent Qualities. And by what measures he ought to *Gain*, to *Enjoy*, or to *Retain* it; and when, how far, and in what Sence he is bound to deny himself in, or to decline it, is what belongs therefore to every One to be satisfy'd about.

Now this is that Honour, which the Wise-man calls a *Good Name*, *Prov. 22. 1.* and tells us, it is *rather to be chosen, than great Riches, and that loving Favour is better than Silver and Gold.* And yet to give us a higher Commendation of it, *Ecc. 7. 1.* he tells us, that a *Good Name is better than precious Ointment.* Now that he does compare and prefer it to precious Ointment, the reason very likely is this, because in the first place, precious Ointment was a most valuable Treasure in the Eastern Nations, as appears by *Hezekiah's* shewing it in a vain Ostentatious manner amongst the rest of his choicest Treasures, those in the *House of his precious things*, to the Babylonish Ambassadors, *2 King. 20. 13.* Next it was what was used in the Consecration of Persons to the highest Dignities and

## III.

How far, and in what Sence, that Honor which consists in the high Esteem and Reputation of the wise and vertuous part of Mankind is to be Renounc'd.

This is what the Wiseman calls a Good Name, and is more valuable than Riches, or precious Ointments.



Employments, as to the Pre-eminence of a King, and the Office of the High Priesthood, as you will see, *Lev. 16. 32. and 1 King. 19. 16.* It was what cast forth, far and near, a most fragrant and delicious Scent to the Comfort of others, and of those, who were Anointed with it; for no sooner had *Mary anointed the Feet of Jesus with her costly Ointment, but the house was filled with the Odour of it, Joh. 12. 3.* Oyls and Ointments were what Wrestlers were formerly wont to use to prepare 'em for the Combat; for being of a piercing Nature, when Chafed in, they would supple the Joints and strengthen the Sinews very much, *It shall enter like Oyl into thy Bones, Psal. 109. 18.* and thereby greatly enable the Body for Action, make it Nimble, and Vigorous, and fit for noble Exercises. And lastly, they were wont anciently to Embalm the Bodies of their Dead therewith, as you may see, *Joh. 19. 14.* to preserve 'em, even after Death, from Stench and Corruption.

*It is a more peculiar Blessing than any the greatest Treasures, and procures better Security to our Persons and Estates.*

And now the Advantages of a Good Name have something therein resembling, but indeed far exceeding each of these, so as to render it much better than precious Ointment. For in the first place, an excellent Reputation and Fame for extraordinary Perfections, Divine Graces, and vertuous Performances, is infinitely more valuable than the most most precious Treasures; for besides that, it is a more peculiar Blessing, than large Mannors and Possessions, Banks of Gold, or Silver, than Indian Stones, and all things that are accounted precious by Worldlings and Usurers; for these are things which are common to the worst, as well as best of Men: Besides this, I say, an high Esteem and Reputation for Goodness, is a better Security by far, than the greatest Wealth. Now the Fundamental reason of some Men's amassing so much Wealth together, is because they think they shall provide thereby against all the ill Events of Fortune, and shall have wherewithal to fend for themselves in times of difficulty and scarcity of Friends. But whereas in Dearths, Famines, Persecutions, and Invasions, the more Wealthy any Man is, the more he is the Object of Envy, and subject to Rapine and Violence: The very Reputation of Uprightness and Integrity, Goodness, Mercy, Charitableness, will be a safe Retreat and Shelter against the Storm. And this alone has deliver'd many a One from Injuries, and Barbarous Usage, whom bolted Doors, and barr'd Gates, and Armed Men to guard 'em, could not protect against the Insults of an Enraged Multitude, and the Plunders of an Intruding Souldiery.

*It is a necessary Qualification to the Episcopal Promotion.*

Next a good Reputation, and an Honourable Esteem amongst Men for worthy Qualities, is a necessary Qualification of those, who are to be Consecrated to the Dignity of Bishops, and of the Priesthood, it being requir'd that *such must have a good Report of those, who are without, 1 Tim. 3. 1.* Credit and Reputation do yield an un-

*It is comfortable to a Man's own self.*

speakable Comfort to a Man's own self, when he has the Approbation of Wise and Good Men, giving the same Testimony as his own Conscience to his worthy Designs and Performances. For which reason the Wise man tells us, *Prov. 15. 13. That a good Report maketh the Bones fat,* whereas a Person labouring under the Infamy of scandalous Vices, has both his own Conscience, and other Men's Contempt of him, piercing him to the very Soul. And with respect to others,

A Good

A Good Name ſends forth a Savour more ſweet, than the moſt precious Ointments, to the Delight of all that are round about him; whereas the very Name of an Unjuſt Oppreſſor and Exactor, of a Riotous and Debaucht Liver, of a Knaviſh, or Perfidious Villain, is a Nuſance and Offence to the Neighbourhood he dwells in, and he is Hated farther than he was ever ſeen.

*And ſmells ſweet in the World.*

What ſhall I ſay? A Good Name and Reputation in the World, renders a Perſon capable of doing Good amongſt Men. It gives Weight to his Counſels, Authority to his Reproofs: Nay, and not only his Preſence, but the very Imagination that he is Preſent, is enough to give a Check to any bale and unworthy Action, or wicked Deſign. *Becauſe I delivered the Poor that cryed, and the Fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him, unto me men gave Ear and waited, and kept Silence at my Counſel,* Job 29. 12. 21. Whereas if a Perſon of known, or but ſuſpected Vices, tho' Backt with the Power of a Maſter, of a Parent, nay of a Magiſtrate, if ſuch a One pretends to correct Sin, or to enjoin the ſtrict Obſervation of any Duty, that Part of Religion is thought the worſe of, and ſlighted the more for his concerning himſelf about it. And as a Good Name renders a Man capable of doing much Good, ſo to have the Approbation of others to his worthy Deſigns, puts Life and Vigour into his Contrivances for the Publick. It makes him Active and Zealous in the Proſecution of 'em, and gives Refreshment to his tired Thoughts and Spirits, under the Fatigues of compaſſing 'em. And to Crown all, when ſuch a One comes to Die, his Death is lamented as a publick Loſs, or ſome Judgment befall'n the Age, or Place, which was not worthy of him. His Memory is ſweet and precious, whereas that of the Infamous ſtinks worſe than his very Carcaſs; or as the Wiſe-man ſays, *The Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed, but the Name of the Wicked ſhall rot,* Prov. 10. 7. So Valuable in it ſelf, is that ſort of Honour, which conſiſts in the high Eſteem and Reputation of the Wiſe and Vertuous Part of Mankind, concerning a Perſon, occaſion'd by the excellent Qualities and divine Graces ſhining in him, or upon the account of ſome extraordinary Actions perform'd by him. And yet for your farther Satisfaction, that it is not only in it ſelf a valuable Bleſſing, but may with due Regulations be deſir'd, enjoy'd, and carefully retain'd by us, I am to tell you, That God himſelf, who is not the Author of Sin, has implanted in the Nature of every Man a love of his Credit, and a deſire to have a Good Name amongſt Wiſe and Vertuous Perſons; and this the Divine Wiſdom has done, that this deſire of Credit and Reputation might be a Spur to excite us to Vertuous Performances, and a Bridle to reſtrain us from laſhing out into Sinful Extravagances. Hence that of the Apoſtle, *Wilt thou not be afraid of the Power? Do that which is Good, and thou ſhalt have Praise of the ſame,* Rom. 13. 3.

*It renders a Perſon capable of doing Good in it.*

*And active in Promoting it.*

*A deſire of Reputation, and Credit, is a thing implanted in our Natures by God.*

And indeed, Laſtly, It is a Duty incumbent upon all Chriſtians, to preſerve their Reputation untainted, and, as much as poſſible, unſuſpected of Evil. So the Apoſtle, *Phil. 2. 15: Be blameleſs, ye Sons of God, without Rebuke, in the miſt of a crooked and perverſe Nation, amongſt whom ſhine ye as Lights in the world.* And in the *1 Theſ. 5. 22.* we are Enjoin'd to *Abſtain from all Appearance of Evil.* Some will pretend, ſo they can but Approve their Conſciences to God, they care not

*And to preſerve a Reputation untainted and unſuſpected of Evil, is a Duty enjoined us by his Laws.*

not what Men say of 'em. But besides that, seldom any grow shameless and regardless of their Credit, till they have lost all sense of Conscience, as well as of their Honour: This is at best but a very uncharitable Saying. It is every Man's Duty indeed, in the first place, to take care of doing any thing, that is in it self Evil, and by which God is offended; and if he cannot discharge his Conscience to him in a Good thing, without incurring the Offence and and Censures of Men, he must in such Case be content to approve his Actions to God only. But in Charity to other Men's Souls, we must also with St. Paul, Act. 24. 16. *Exercise our selves to have always a Conscience void of offence, as towards God, so towards men,* by giving no occasion to suspect us of Evil, and that because of giving no Offence, *Lest our liberty become a stumbling Block to them that are Weak, and an occasion of falling in our Brother's way,* which we are Caution'd against, Rom. 14. 13. and 1 Cor. 8. 9. "Besides, that "if a Person be of ill Fame, tho' he may not deserve it, all his "Speeches and Actions shall be ill Interpreted, no Man regards "what he says, or does, his Proposals shall be suspected, his Counsels and Rebukes, tho' wholesome and just, scorn'd and despis'd; "the Man he speaks for, the side he adheres to, the Cause he defends, and the Business he manages shall suffer Prejudice, and speed "the worse for the ill Opinion is held of him. So that as the Father

*Nobis necessaria est  
Vita nostra, alius Pena  
nostra. Angl. de Bon.  
vid. Cap. 22.*

"said, "A Good Life is necessary to us, and a Good "Name necessary to our Brethren. And as we must "labour to have a good Conscience towards God for "our own sakes, so also to have a good Report amongst Men for "our Neighbours. So Valuable is a good Esteem in it self, so desirable to be Attain'd, and so carefully to be Preserv'd.

*Nevertheless  
even a Good  
Name is in  
some measure  
to be Renoun-  
ced by us, &  
the Tempta-  
tions it gives  
us.*

Nevertheless, as useful as is the Honour and Esteem of Good Men, even this is in some measure to be Renounc'd by us, and the Temptations also it gives us, which are not inconsiderable. For the natural Desire of Honour and Credit amongst Men, is apt to make us too eagerly to desire Praise, making our own Glory the main End of the Good we do, or at least-wise to make us desire more than is proportionable to our Deserts. When possess'd of Reputation and Esteem, we are apt to take it wholly to our selves, and not to refer it to God, to whom the Glory of all that is Good in us, does properly belong; and to make it an Instrument of our own Advancement only, neglecting to use the Authority, which our Credit and Reputation in the World does give us, to discountenance Irreligion, and to encourage Piety in the World. And sometimes Persons do so much over-value their Good Name and Reputation amongst Men, as to fly to undue Means of preserving it; nay, to prefer the Esteem of Men more than the Honour, that cometh from God: In all which Cases there is great occasion for that Renunciation and Self-denial, with respect to that Honour, which consists in an High Esteem and Reputation amongst Men.

And, First, It behoves us so far to Renounce and Reject the Honour and Reputation that shall accrue to us from our Pious or Good Works, as *Not to make our own Glory the end and Reason of any Good Honour that we do.* We must Take heed that we do not our Alms before Men, to be seen shall accrue to of them, otherwise we shall have no Reward of our Father which is



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in Heaven, Matth. 6. 1. But on the contrary, the main and chief End of all we do, must be God's Glory; insomuch, that *Whether good Works, we Eat, or Drink, or whatever we do, we must do all to the Glory of God,* as not to make our own Glory the End and Reason of any Good we do. 1 Cor. 10. 13. And indeed so far should we be from affecting the Honours and Applauses of Men upon the account of anything well done by us, that it becomes us rather to walk as silently and retiredly in the ways of Vertue, as we can, never endeavouring Ostentatiouly to publish and proclaim our Pious and Good Performances, declining Fame and Popularity, and modestly concealing our own Praises and Excellencies: But when either the Glory of God, or the good of our Brother is concern'd and promoted in the Manifestation, *Letting our Light shine before Men,* then, and to the End only, *that others seeing our good Works, they may Glorify our Father, which is in Heaven,* Matth. 5. 16. For as One well observes, "We are rather to affect those things, which deserve Fame, than the obtaining of Fame it self; because Honour must be the Effect and Fruit of Well-doing, and not the chief Motive, or final Cause: Or, as *Seneca* expresses it, It is good to be Praised, but better to be Praiseworthy. But then if our Reputation and Praise does come in here, it is desirable enough, and is very seasonable, and comes in its due place, as being subordinate to God's Glory. And indeed it is most successfully obtain'd, when least sought after; every one despising the most worthy Performances, when they see a Man aim thereby at so low a Mark, as Humane Praise and Glory.

Secondly, *We must not Affect, but Renounce and Refuse those Praises, which are beyond, or above our Deserts.* We may moderately desire to be well Esteem'd, but it must be in proportion to our Vertues. For as it is Unjust to assume to our selves Praises, of which we are no ways Deserving: So it is Vanity and Vain-glory, to expect more than we deserve: And, *We must not be desirous of Vain-glory,* Gal. 5. 26. And to this End must therefore take care of Self-love, which makes us to magnify our own Parts, and to lessen those of our Neighbour.

Thirdly, Persons, who have a great Reputation and Esteem amongst Men, upon the account of some worthy Performances, *Must beware of taking the Honour thereof wholly to themselves, and of not Transferring it to God,* to whom the Glory of all that is Good in us, or excellently perform'd by any of us, does properly belong. *St. Paul,* tho' He labour'd more abundantly in the saving of Men's Souls, *than all the rest of the Apostles,* yet was so far from taking the Glory thereof to himself, that he corrects it with a *Not I, but the Grace of God, which was with me,* 1 Cor. 15. 10. And so must all of us do, and instead of Glorifying in our selves, must Glory in the Lord, and say, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the Praise,* Psal. 115. 1. And the reason thereof is, that the good Temper of our Souls is wrought in us by the Grace of his Holy Spirit; and if we shall accomplish any worthy Design, besides that, it is owing to his Grace assisting us, it is owing also to his Providence, which orders all those lucky Hits, and favourable Circumstances, and all those other Advantages, whereby we do bring it to Perfection: For *Every good and perfect Gift cometh from above,* Jam. 1. 17. and, *What is it that we have not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. "We are not forbid to receive Honour,

T t

" says

"says the Pious and Learned Bishop *Taylor*, but to seek it for De-  
 "signs of Pride and Complacency, or to make it rest in our Hearts.  
 "But when the Hand of Vertue receives the Honour, and transmits  
 "it to God from our own Head, the Desires of Nature are sufficient-  
 "ly satisfy'd, and nothing of Religion contradicted.

IV. *We must ab-  
 hor making a  
 Reputation  
 for Religion  
 an Instrument  
 only to our  
 own Ad-  
 vancement.* Fourthly, You must abhor that vain Hypocrisy of those, who  
 make the Reputation for Religion a meer Engine to screw them-  
 selves up into places of Power, and an Instrument to promote their  
 Trade only; but must chiefly use that Authority, which your Credit  
 and Reputation for Religion may give you, to discountenance Vice,  
 and to encourage Vertue in the World.

*You must Renounce and Abhor, I say, that profane Hypocrisy of those,  
 who make their Reputation for Religion a meer Engine to screw themselves  
 up into places of Power, and an Instrument to promote their Trade only.*  
 This is the known Policy of a great many, who when they have  
 a mind to usurp the Places of their Governours, put up to be great  
 Zealots for Reformation of Religion and Manners; and when they  
 have a design to Engross to themselves all the Trade of their Neigh-  
 bours, turn over to some Demure and Pharisaical Sect, that makes  
 greater Pretences and outward Shews of Godliness, than their hone-  
 st, but modest Neighbours. But for any Person to presume to  
 make so sacred and venerable a Thing, as Religion really is, a  
 meer Tool and Engine to mount themselves into the highest Posts  
 and Promotions, into Business and Trades, is so Sacrilegious, so  
 Prophane an Impiety, such an Aggravated, such a provoking Pitch  
 of Wickedness, that if Hell be heated, as the *Babylonian Furnace*  
 was, *seven times* hotter than ordinary, for any sort of Sinners,  
 surely it must be for those, who do prostitute the Honour of God  
 and Religion to such vile Purposes. And this therefore is a Practice,  
 which must of all things in the World be detested by you. Certain  
 it is, the mild JESUS was never known to utter Himself with so  
 much Indignation and Anger, as towards those sort of Men, who  
 made the Pretences of Religion, a meer Instrument to serve their  
 Ambition and Covetousness. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees,  
 Hypocrites, for ye devour Widows Houses, and for a Pretence make long  
 Prayers, therefore ye shall receive the greater Damnation,* Matth. 23. 14.  
 So that far be it from any of you, to make so Sacred and Venerable  
 a thing, as Religion, an Instrument only of Ambition and getting  
 Wealth.

*But must use  
 the Authority  
 our Credit  
 gives us to  
 discounte-  
 nance Vice  
 and to enco-  
 rage Vertue  
 in the World.* But you must use that Authority, which your Credit and Reputation  
 for Religion may give you, to discountenance Vice, and to encourage Vertue  
 in the World. A Person of approv'd Sincerity, and of known Piety,  
 has upon that very account, a very great Power over the Hearts and  
 Minds of Men, as I have told you; so that he can easily Mould 'em  
 into the like Temper with himself, if he will but seriously apply  
 himself to that Purpose. And to this Purpose therefore you must  
 use that Credit, Reputation, and Authority you shall have with Men,  
 who think well and honourably of you, namely, to pull 'em back  
 from running headlong in a Course of Sin, and as Allurements to  
 entice 'em to follow your Example in those Vertues and good Parts,  
 for which you your selves shall be so Commendable. It is a Talent  
 God has committed to you, to Trade withal for his Glory, and if  
 you



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you shall neglect to lay out any thing of that Nature to your Master's use, it will be required at your Hands, as you will see *Matth. 25.*

Fifthly, As valuable as is a Good Name and Reputation amongst Men, *You must Renounce all undue Means of preserving it*; In which Rank I shall place, not only Duelling, that most Barbarous and Unchristian Custom, amongst the great Ones: But also going to Law upon every Scandal, so common amongst the Ordinary sort of People when they slander one another. As to the former, That Person, who Challenges his Slanderer to give him Satisfaction, as he calls it, in the way of Duel, he seems to me to take the ready way to confirm the World in the Opinion, that he was not Injur'd. The worst his Adversary could say of him, was something which spoke him a very Ill Man; and herein he goes about to prove himself the worst of Men, even a Murderer of his Neighbour, and a *Felo de*, and consequently one that might not be unlikely to commit any other Wickedness. But if it should take off the Scandal from him, in the Opinion of a foolish World, what Comfort will that afford, when it is certain, that *No Murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him*, 1 Joh. 3. 15.

V.  
As valuable  
as is a Good  
Name and  
Reputation  
amongst Men,  
we must Re-  
nounce all un-  
due Means of  
preserving it.

Such are  
Duelling upon  
the account  
of Slanders a-  
mongst the  
great Ones.

Nor is it so agreeable to that forbearing and forgiving Temper, which should be in every Christian, to go to Law upon words of Slander. *Now therefore there is utterly a Fault amongst you, because ye go to Law one with another; why do you not rather take Wrong?* That is, in matters of Trespas and Fraud, if the Loss may be supported, or in Cases of Slander, wherein generally speaking, there is a much more effectual way of clearing an injur'd Innocence, than by Impleading of the Slanderer before a Magistrate: Why in such Cases do you not rather take Wrong? I say, in such Cases there is generally a much more effectual way of clearing an injur'd Innocence, than by Impleading of the Slanderer before a Magistrate. For besides that; this sort of Lawing seems in most, a piece of Revenge in the Party traduc'd, upon his Accuser, for discovering some secret Wickedness, which he was ashamed to have publisht, rather than with any Design, or Hopes of clearing his Innocence; insomuch that he who comes off Triumphantly from the Justice of Peace, is seldom the better thought of in the Neighbourhood, and still they will be apt to think it was a Work of Darknes, and only wanted a sufficient Proof: Besides this, I say, an open and plain Discovery before Neighbours, of the falshood and malice of the Slanderer in the most mild and Christian way; or if such a Discovery cannot be made, a Circumspection and Care to live so Inoffensively and Innocently, as no one will believe the Calumny, this will in time work all evil Surmises and Suspicions out of the Minds of Men.

Going to Law  
thereupon u-  
sual amongst  
common Peo-  
ple.

Lastly, *And we must utterly Renounce and forfeit the Esteem of Men*, *rather than incur the Dis-favour of God.* The best and wisest of Men are but Men still, and do often judge of other Persons, and their Proceedings, not as they ought, or as God Judgeth. Thus we see, *When Jesus began to shew unto his Disciples, how that he must go up unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the Elders, and Chief Priests, and Scribes, and be killed; then Peter took him up, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be.*

Lastly, we  
must utterly  
Renounce and  
forfeit the Es-  
teem of Men,  
rather than  
incur the  
dis-favour of  
God.



be unto thee, Matth. 16. 21, 22. that is, he endeavour'd earnestly to dissuade him from so hazardous an Undertaking, and would have him be more careful of himself. And so it often happens to his faithful Disciples, especially his Ministers. If any more than ordinarily Zealous of their Master's Glory, or faithful in his Service, shall attempt to Reprove a great Man, or to oppose the Stream of Wickedness, or some ungodly, but prevailing Customs, his Friends, too much favouring of worldly Wisdom, shall violently dissuade him, not to be thus *Righteous over-much*, as they think.

But if it shall so happen, that in the Discharge of our Duty, we have not their Approbation, be they never so Wise, or esteem'd never so Vertuous, having in the first place with all Sincerity consider'd what is necessary for us to do, we must vigorously proceed in the Discharge of a good Conscience, let who will condemn us of Rashness, or Imprudence.

And this is what the Apostle commands us, 2 Cor. 6. 3, 4. 8. He bids us *Give no offence in any thing, that the Ministry be not blamed*; that is, he would have us make it, in the first place, a special part of our Care, to Abstain strictly from all things, that may give any just Offence, and Avert any from the Faith; endeavouring to Approve our selves to all, that all Men may look on our Behaviour in the Gospel, with Reverence, and not with Censure: And so be attracted to a Christian Life, not deter'd from it. But then he charges us withal, *In all things to approve our selves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience, Affliction, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report, and good Report, as deceivers, and yet true*; that is, he would have us approve our Fidelity in the Discharge of our Office by all proper Means, thro' the various Fates of being reproachfully Treated by some, as well as respectfully by others, by being Vilified, as well as Commended. So that thus at length you have seen, how that that part of Honour, which consists in the Good Esteem and Reputation of the wise and vertuous part of Mankind, tho' it is much to be valued in it self, and may be lawfully Desir'd, comfortably Enjoy'd, and ought carefully to be Preserv'd: Yet there is great place for Renunciation, with respect both to the Attainment and Enjoyment thereof; and particularly as to the Loss of it, that we must so far Renounce it, as not to prefer the Esteem of Men before the Honour, that cometh from God.

IV. Fourthly, And now I am to take into consideration the Honour, which is conferr'd, not by the wise and vertuous part of Mankind, nor given always upon the account of good Qualities, and worthy Performances; but the Esteem of another sort of Men, and for the most part, for quite different Qualities and Performances, viz. *The Applauses of the Vulgar, and of the Croud of Men, upon the account of what they judge Praise-worthy and Glorious.*

Now by the *Vulgar, and the Croud of Men*, I do not mean barely *Mechanicks*, and the lower Rank of Mankind; but also that mixt Multitude, or Herd of Men, as well High, as Low, Rich, as well as Poor, all of what Rank, or Degree soever, who have little, or no Principles of Religion, or Vertue, all whose Apprehensions of Divine and Religious Matters are mean and low, and not lifted above the common Pitch, and to those Heights and Improvements given us by

by true *Philosophy*, and the *Christian Doctrine*. Truly all such are accounted the *Vulgar*, and shall be Herded amongst the *Croud*, for me, whether they be clad in Silks, or Furs, and fare Deliciously every day ; or whether they work at the Anvil, or follow the Plow, or beg at our Doors.

And by their *Applauses*, I do mean, that Vogue and Suffrage, that Approbation, and whatever other Expressions of good liking, which they do commonly give to bad Actions, and sinful Practices, as Swearing, Drinking, Whoring, Fighting, Duelling, and the like. And these Applauses of theirs, are as common and great a Temptation to most of those Sins, which are committed, as any thing whatsoever, and must therefore be utterly Renounc'd, Detested, and Abhorr'd by us.

*This sort of Honour must be utterly and absolutely renounced.*

So that if ever it should so happen, that you shall unhappily commit any of those scandalous Sins (which God avert) and any of those profane and unthinking Creatures, who make a Mock, a meer Jest of Sin, shall Applaud you for the same ; instead of being pleas'd thereat, you must take Shame to your self, and let 'em know you are too much griev'd and troubled at your having committed such Folly and Madnes, to be pleas'd at their Recital and Plaudits given it. No sure : A Repentance consisting in Sorrow and Shame is what ought to follow Sin ; but to Glory in it, and to receive Applauses for it, is infinitely to Aggravate it. And know this for certain, that *Except you Repent, ye shall all likewise perish*, as many other Sinners, triumphing like Mad-men in their Impieties, have done before you, *Luk. 13. 3.*

And now Lastly, it only remains that I lay before you, *In what Sence, and how far you are bound to Renounce those outward Expressions and Significations of Respect, either by Word or Deed, which are usually given upon the account of any of the foremention'd Honours.* Hitherto we have consider'd Honour in its internal Parts only, as Birth and Quality, Authority and Dignity, Reputation and Esteem, either for good, or bad Qualities and Performances ; and have shew'd you in what Sence either of these are to be Renounc'd. And now I am to do the like as to that outward part of Honour, whereby is expressed and signify'd to the Senses, the Eyes and Ears of men, the Respect, which is born to Persons, upon the account of any of the fore-mention'd Honours.

*Lastly, in what Sence, and how far we must Renounce those outward Expressions of Respect, either by Word or Deed, which are usually given upon the account of any of the fore-mention'd Honours.*

And as to these outward Significations of Honour, they are made either by *Word*, or by *Deed*. By Word ; and they are either *Divine Expressions* of our Veneration and Honour, *viz.* Those Names and Attributes peculiarly belonging to God, or *Humane Ones*, as Titles of Honour, when we call a Person Lord, most Gracious, most Excellent, most Noble, or the like ; or Titles of Respect, as when we call a Person Father, Master, &c. Also as to the outward Significations of Honour by *Deed* ; these are again either Divine, as Adoration, or Religious Worship, Prostrating our selves on the Ground before God, and such other Significations of our most excessive Self-abasement in respect of him, and our infinite Distance from him ; or they are Humane, such as may be also us'd to Men, as bowing of the Body, bending of the Knee, baring of the Head, &c. All which are Lawful, Innocent, and Dutiful ways of expressing our Respects ; and are also

necessary, according as they are apply'd to Persons, to whom by the Laws of God, and right Reason they are due.

And now the Question will be, In what Sence, and how far any Person is bound to Renounce these Honours and Respects when conferr'd upon 'em.

I. *And, First, No Created Being, either Men, or Angels, must suffer those Respects to be given them, whether by Word, or Deed, which are proper and peculiar to signify our sence of God's Majesty and Perfections.* Thus you'll see, when Paul and Barnabas had miraculously Heal'd A Creeple at Lystra, who had never walked, the people would have done Sacrifice unto them, as if they were Gods; but those Good Men no sooner perceiv'd it, but in the Abhorrence of the Blasphemy, Rent their Garments, and ran in upon them to restrain them, crying out, and saying, Sirs, Why do ye these things? We also are Men of like Passions with your selves, and preach unto you, that you should turn from these Vanities, to serve the living God, Act. 14. 14, 15. And no doubt, but as the Angel also refused the Worship which John offer'd him, Rev. 22. 9. So both the Blessed Saints and Angels above, do now with the utmost Indignation, Renounce that Divine Worship given 'em by their Superstitious Votaries, the Papists.

Women therefore must with Detestation renounce those Blasphemous Complements, wherein Divine Perfections are usually ascrib'd to them.

Nor must any Humane Creature forbear to Renounce, so as to express the utmost Detestation and Abhorrence thereof, when any of the Divine Attributes and Perfections are ascribed to 'em by the Flattery of sinful Men; for the want of which Renunciation Herod you'll see, Act. 12. 21, 22, 23. was the most signally punisht by the Hand of God. It happened that upon a set Day Herod arrayed in Royal Apparel, sat upon his Throne, and made an Oration unto the People; And they gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a Man; and immediately the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the Glory, and he was eaten up of Worms, and gave up the Ghost; that is, because he disclaimed not that Blasphemous Flattery of the People, God Executed that remarkable Vengeance upon him. And this ought to be a Warning to those vain and inconsiderate Women, who in the Courtships that are paid 'em, and the Complements, which are usually made 'em, do suffer even Divine Attributes and Perfections to be ascribed to 'em. Nay, and these they receive, not only without rebuking those that presume to offer 'em, but with all the Complacence and Satisfaction in 'em. But surely this will be required, not only at their Hands, who do so Blasphemously Complement 'em, but at theirs also, who do patiently suffer God to be so much Blasphemed in their Praises; and the same Vengeance, which overtook Herod, will not fall short of them also, if they Renounce and Refuse not, with the utmost Detestation, such Impiety. And it is indeed so common a strain of Wickedness, that I thought it very requisite to Advertise you of it, and seriously to warn you against admitting it.

II. *Secondly, Every Man must renounce and refuse those Titles, and Respects, and Precedences, which are not his due, but belong to Persons above him.* A Distinction of Titles and Respects is necessary to keep up Order and Distinction of Men, and their Merits; and it is a great Disorder and Confusion, when Persons either Take, or Receive such, as do not belong to 'em: So that one cannot know who is High



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High in Rank, or Reputation, or who is Low in the World in re- and Prece-  
spect of either. This is what the Wise-man complains of, *Eccl. 10.* *dences which*  
*5, 6, 7.* as a great Evil, and such as it concerns the Magistrate to *are not his*  
restrain by Law. *There is an Evil, which I have seen under the Sun, as due, but be-*  
*an Error, which proceedeth from the Ruler; Folly is set in great dignity, long to Per-*  
*and the Rich sit in low place; I have seen Servants upon Horses, and him.*  
*Princes walking as Servants upon the Earth.*

Nay, Lastly, So far must any One be from Assuming any thing *Lastly, And*  
of this Nature above him, that *It becomes every Person out of Modesty, must in Mo-*  
*Humility, and good Manners, to decline his due in this kind: And must* *desty, Humi-*  
*ever Renounce the Entitling and Placing of himself, and leave it to others.* *lity, and good*  
This our Saviour prescribes, *Luk. 14. 8, 9, 10, 11.* *When thou art* *Manners. de-*  
*bid to a Wedding, sit not down in the highest Room, lest a more honoura-* *cline his due*  
*ble than thou be bidden of him; but sit down in the lowest Room, that when* *in this kind;*  
*he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend go up higher: Then* *and must re-*  
*shalt thou have Worship in the presence of them, who are at meat with thee.* *nounce the*  
And the reason of this Appointment of our Saviour's, in so seem- *Entitling of*  
ingly trivial a Case, was not only to pull down our Ambition and *himself, and*  
Pride, but to promote Courtesy, and Civility, and good Manners, *permit that*  
which are very considerable Vertues in Society, and therefore to be *to others.*  
sure of good account in Christianity.

But the Contrary to both these last Instances, of Renouncing out-  
ward Respects and Honours, is one of the great *Vanities of the*  
*World*, which shall be more fully spoke to under another Head.  
But yet I must not dismiss this without answering an Objection,  
or Two.

It is usual amongst other Titles of Princes, to ascribe to 'em *Objections a-*  
the Attributes of *most Gracious, most Religious, most Excellent,* and *gainst receiv-*  
the like; which may seem to favour too much of that Flattery, for *ing Titles of*  
admitting of which *Herod* was Punisht: And the Absurdity seems *Honour, Re-*  
to be the greater, if those Princes happen to be Vicious and Un- *spect and Pre-*  
godly. But here it is to be consider'd, that Princes, and great *cedency, An-*  
Magistrates, as they are in an Exalted Condition above the rest of *swered.*  
Men; so those Titles must be given 'em, which shall raise and  
maintain a due Veneration towards them, and their Office. And  
even when the Persons Invested with those Dignities happen to be  
Cruel and Wicked; yet such Titles, as most Gracious, most Re-  
ligious, are not un-befitting their Office, tho' they may not so well  
suit their Personal Character; and it is upon the account of that,  
that they are given 'em: As it was upon the Score of his Office, that  
St. Paul styl'd *Festus*, a Heathen Magistrate, *most Noble*, *Act. 26. 25.*

Next it is urged against Receiving Titles of Respect, those  
words of our Saviour, *Be ye not called Masters, for one is your Master,*  
*even Christ*, *Matth. 23. 10.* But in order to clear this, you must con-  
sider, that this is an Hebrew Idiom, or manner of Expressing, in  
which Calling and Being, are all one, as *They shall call his name*  
*Emanuel*, signifies, *he shall be Emanuel, or God with us.* So here,  
*Be ye not called Masters*, is a forbidding of Men to be Masters one to a-  
nother: And in what Sence is this to be understood? Why, amongst  
the Jews, you must know, those who took upon 'em to be Leaders  
and Teachers, did challenge a blind Obedience from their Disciples  
and Followers, and requir'd 'em to give up their Faith, to be abso-

lutely Sway'd by 'em : But our Saviour would have no meer Man pretend to be so much a Master over Men's Faith, as if he were Infallible ; in which Sence to be a Master, was our Saviour's Right. But otherwise, the Title of Master, as it signifies no more than a Humane Respect, is no more to be refus'd, than that of Father : Which yet, as amongst the Jews it was us'd to mean such a Principal of the School of the Prophets, as no Man ought to contradict, was also forbid, *Matth. 23. 9.*

Lastly, It is objected against Persons of Quality being Placed, or Seated higher than others in Religious Assemblies, from those words of *St. James, 2. 2, 3, 4.* *If there come into your Assembly a man with a gold Ring, in goodly Apparel, and there come also a poor man, in vile Raiment ; and ye have respect unto him that weareth the gay Clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place ; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool, Are ye not then partial in your selves, and become Judges of evil thoughts ?* But this Objection will be taken off, and this difficult Place clear'd, if you consider what is here meant by *Assembly*, and upon what account *Respect of Persons is forbid to be had to any one in them.* Now by *Assembly* is here to be understood a Court of Judicature, where Law-suits are tryed, for so not only the word translated, *Assembly*, does elsewhere, as *Matth. 10. 17.* signify ; but there are several Expressions in this place, which do determine it here to this Sence ; as particularly when those, that order'd the Rich to sit in a more Honourable Place, and the Poor in a less Honourable, are said to have a *Footstool*, which did belong to Tribunals ; and to be Judges of evil Thoughts, that is, partial in their Judgments, Men that thought more of the Persons, than their Causes.

And the reason why that sort of Respect of Persons in their judicial Assemblies, the Placing of the Man of Quality in a higher, the Poorer in a lower Place, which seems not to have been so material, was notwithstanding forbid ; was because this would have been lookt upon, according to the then Apprehensions of the Jews, as a Token of Partiality in the Judge : For as the Learned *Hammond* upon the Place does observe, It was provided by a Canon of the Jews, that when a Rich Man, and a Poor have a Suit together before their Consistories, either both must sit, or both stand in the same Rank, to avoid all marks of Partiality. So that this Place forbids not Precedency and Place to be given, or taken, by Persons that are in Quality, or Authority, above others, either in Church Assemblies, or in other Meetings ; but only in the Judicial Meetings of those times, and not then, but because that in the then Apprehensions of Men, such Precedency would signify Partiality in the Judge, that suffer'd it. So that it remains, that *Titles of Honour, Respects and Precedency* may be receiv'd, when duly given. And I thought it requisite to take off these Objections, both to clear these mistaken Places of Scripture, and that you might not refuse *To pay Honour to whom Honour is due*, which is a Duty upon all men, *Rom. 13. 7.* And which a foolish Sect amongst us do deny, chiefly grounding the Rudeness of their Behaviour towards their Betters, upon the now mention'd places of Scripture, which they wrest, as they do the other, to their own Destruction. Thus much upon this Occasion.

T H E  
Sixteenth Lecture.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his works; the Pomps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.

**H**AVING undertook to give you a particular and distinct account, not only of those Temptations, which arise from the *World* in general, but also from all the particular things, whether Good, or Evil, therein contain'd: And having already survey'd the *Riches* and *Honours* thereof, and distinctly shew'd you in what Sence, and how far you are to Renounce each of them, and every Particular included in them. I come now to consider,

Thirdly, *The Pleasures thereof, and to shew you in what Sence, and what's meant how far you are also to Renounce the Pleasures of this World.*

Now all Pleasure, of what Kind soever it be, does arise from the Agreeableness of the Object with some Faculty that can perceive it. And therefore Pleasure in general, *Is that Satisfaction and Delight, which any part of our Nature perceives, when its Appetites are gratify'd with what it desires.* And as both Soul and Body have their several perceptive Faculties and Apperites; so the Gratification and Satisfaction, which is given to both, do cause different kinds of Pleasure. And accordingly they may all of 'em, I do think, be reduc'd to these Four, *Rational, Sensitive, Sensual, and Recreative Pleasures.*

And, First, *As to Rational Pleasure: This is that noble Satisfaction and sweet Delight, which the Soul perceives, when it finds it self Improve in Knowledge, or in Vertue; or when it reflects upon the Good it has done.* As to Knowledge, the most delicious Dainties are not so truly satisfactory to the Bodily Appetite, as real and useful Knowledge is to the Rational; nor is Light more grateful to the Eye, than Knowledge is to the Understanding. And all useful Knowledge, especially Divine, ought to be sought after with all the Study and Industry possible, and we cannot too much indulge the Appetite, which craves it: Infomuch that St. Paul did not cease to pray for the Collossians, and to desire that they might be filled with the Knowledge of God's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, Col. 1. 9. And to increase in Vertue, to get the victory over our Passions, to subdue our Appetites, and the like, yields so great and pure a Satisfaction, that Happiness it self is defin'd to be that Pleasure, which the Mind takes in from a sence of Vertue, and a conscience of Well-doing; and of conforming all things to the Rules of both. And then as to that sence

I.  
Rational  
Pleasure is  
very Excel-  
lent, and Al-  
lowable.



of Joy and Comfort, which Vertuous and Heavenly Minds do feel in doing Good; this is exceedingly more Excellent and Exalted, than all worldly and wicked Pleasures, as is exemplify'd in our Saviour, who counted it *His meat and drink to do the Will of him that sent him, and to finish his work*, Joh. 4. 34. which was *To go about doing Good*, Act. 10. 28. So excellent a thing is Rational Pleasure, and so much it is our Duty, as well as Interest, to gratify our selves therewith. But yet as Excellent and Heavenly a Pleasure as this is, there is room for *Renunciation*, even with respect to this. And,

*But First,* First, *No Man must make the end of his Knowledge to be the meer Pleasure of Knowing*, that is, we must not seek after Knowledge, meerly for Knowledge sake; and not for the Use and Instruction of our selves and others. The true End of Knowledge is to direct our selves and others thereby to Happiness, both in this, and the other World. And indeed such a Greediness, as is seen in some Men, of

swallowing up all sorts of Learning, and not letting others to partake of it, and to be Benefited by it, is but a better sort of Sensuality and Voluptuousness, and ought therefore to be Renounced by every Christian. The greatest Goods are ever common: They were design'd by God to be so; and by good Christians they are made so. And Knowledge then being a principal Good, every good Man is free in Communicating of that, and of Edifying others therewith; and therefore it is requir'd of a Bishop, whose Knowledge is suppos'd to exceed other Men's, that *He be apt to teach*, 1 Tim. 3. 2.

*Nor Secondly,* Secondly, *And as to that Pleasure, which arises from the Sence and Conscience of good and worthy Deeds, as much as we may be permitted to relish and enjoy it, yet we must take care, that our Satisfaction and Delight be more, because we are really Vertuous, and that we do Good, than that we be admir'd and applauded for it; for We must take heed that we do not our Alms, or whatever other Good, before men to be seen of them; otherwise we have no reward of our Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 6. 1. But to proceed, Deeds, be so. Secondly, There is a *Sensitive Pleasure, and that is when the Animal Life, or the Bodily Senses are gratify'd with those Objects, which are agreeable to 'em*. All Pleasure, as was said, arises from the suitableness and agreeableness between the perceptive Faculties, and the Objects that it, as because affect them. And our Bountiful Maker, as he has given the Animal Life many perceptive Faculties, the Senses of Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Feeling; so he has provided suitable Objects for all those several Faculties, and does allow us to gratify our selves therewith: For it is good and comely for one to Eat and to Drink, and to enjoy the Good of all his labour that he taketh under the Sun, all the days of his Life which God giveth him; for it is his portion, Eccl. 5. 18. Nay, it is very necessary, that we should take Pleasure in gratifying the sensible Cravings of our Nature, for if our Palates do not relish our Meat, or if our Stomachs refuse it, we should starve. And indeed the Comforts and Enjoyments of this Life, which we receive from the bountiful Hand of God, is a great Subject of our Praises and Thanksgivings to him. *Thou preparest a Table for me in the presence of mine Enemies; thou anointest my Head with Oyl,*

II.

*Sensitive Pleasure, which results from the suitable-ness between the perceptive Faculties, and the Objects that affect them, is lawful.*

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*Oyl, my Cup runneth over*, said Holy David, in a great fence of God's bountiful Goodness towards him, in bestowing upon him so many worldly Comforts. Thus these Sensitive Pleasures may be lawfully Enjoy'd by us, and they are only then, and so far to be Renounc'd, when they become,

Thirdly, *Sensual*, which when they do, they are indeed the greatest Temptations the World has to draw us into Sin; and many Thousands there are, whom when nothing else could Corrupt, have been miserably foil'd by the Power of sensual Pleasures: Which what they are, and how far to be Renounc'd, I come now to declare unto you.

*These Pleasures unlawful only when they become, Thirdly, Sensual.*

And it is then, that these *Sensitive Pleasures*, which otherwise would be for the Preservation and Comfort of our Nature, and the Matter of our Praises to God: It is then, I say, that they become *Sensual*, and so are to be Renounced, when they gratify only our corrupt and depraved Natures. As the sensitive Nature craves such things as are suitable to it, and are necessary to its Preservation and Comfort in this Life; and sensitive Pleasures are such as arise from such allowable Gratifications: So the *Sensual* and Corrupted Nature of Man craves these sensitive Pleasures beyond Bounds and Moderation: It prefers 'em before Rational and Divine Pleasures. It appears to relish no Enjoyments like those of Sense; it gluts it self with sensitive Pleasures, so as to surfeit on these Sweets. Nay, and lastly, the *Sensual Man* does load and burthen his Nature therewith, so as to render it unfit for the Duties of his Calling and Religion. These are the inordinate Cravings of the sensual Nature; and when we gratify this corrupted Nature of ours, to this immoderate Degree, with *Sensitive Pleasures*; then those Pleasures which were in themselves allowable, become *Sensual*, and such as must be utterly Renounced by every Christian. And as we will accordingly Renounce *Sensual Pleasures*.

First, *We must not prefer Sensitive Ones in our Judgments, or Desires, either before our spiritual Joy in God, or the eternal Joys of his Kingdom*; when we prefer which is what the Carnal Man does do; *Which is, I say, what the carnal Man does do*: "For while the Flesh is the prevailing Ingre-  
"dient in any Man, he only relishes the satisfaction of the Senses:  
"He cannot enjoy God, he cannot delight in doing his Will, no  
"more than a Swine can in clean Pasture, whose natural Property  
"inclines him only to wallow in the Mire. But when the Soul is  
"clarify'd and purg'd by the great Refiner, how sublime and satis-  
"fying a Pleasure does it feel in the Love of God, and in his Service!  
"As in natural Feeding, when the Palate is in due Temper, our  
"Tast commends our proper Food to the Appetite, and the Ap-  
"petite to the Stomach; but a foul Stomach dis-affects the Appe-  
"tite, spoils the Palate, and the most savoury and wholesom Meat  
"is loathsom, when the Disease is the Taster. Thus if the Soul  
"be in its due Temper, the *Doing the will of God would be our Meat*  
"and Drink, mixt with a sweeter Pleasure than those natural  
"Operations are; but the Soul in the unregenerate Man is so Cor-  
"rupt and Carnaliz'd, that it has no tast of the pure Delights of  
"Blessed Spirits in Communion with God: Like the *Israelites*,  
"who despis'd the Bread of Angels, and impatiently long'd for the

*As, First, Judgments or Desires, either before our spiritual Joy in God, or the eternal Joys of his Kingdom.*



"Onions and Garlick, and Flesh-Pots of Egypt. But this must not be our Temper, but with the Holy Psalmist, we must be able experimentally to say; *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than Gold, yea than much fine Gold, sweeter also than Honey, and the Honey-comb*, Psal. 119. 9, 10.

II. Secondly, And we must Renounce it as a great sign of a sensual Spirit, which relishes no Enjoyments like those of Sence, *When a Person is observ'd to be wholly in a manner purveying for the Belly, Cooking, or Ordering his Dishes, always commending, or rather quarrelling with every thing he eats or drinks: No, the Discourses of Philolophical, wise, and vertuous Minds, is even at the very Table of other-guests Matters, than of the Excellency of that Dish, the Poyancy of such a Sauce, or the Flayour of such and such Liquors. And with these Epicures we may justly Expostulate in the words of our Saviour: Are ye yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand that whatever entereth into the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the Draught*, Matth. 15. 17. And it is sure a sign of an Understanding below the Excellency of the Soul of Man, to concern it self so much about what in few Hours will go down into the Guts, the Sink, and the vilest part of the Body.

III. Thirdly, *It must be Renounced as a high and sinful Sensuality to glut our Senses, so as to surfeit on these Sweets.* There is nothing which does more decay Nature, which brings upon us more desperate and incurable Diseases, and does more precipitate and hasten a sudden Death, than Excess in the Gratifications of Men's Lusts and Appetites. But this is grossly to abuse the Creatures of God, which were allow'd us only for our Use; It is to make but an ungrateful Return to him, for all his Bounties: And is unnaturally to destroy our selves for the sake of a paultry Pleasure, which vanisheth in the very Enjoyment; of a Pleasure, which is mixed with more bitter Ingredients than Gall and Wormwood: *For even in their Laughter the heart of those sensual Men is sorrowful, and the end of their mirth is heaviness*, Prov. 14. 13.

Lastly, *The Deliciousness of those Pleasures must not cause any one to load and burthen his Nature therewith, to that Degree, as to render him unfit for the Duties of his Calling and Religion; in which respect those do Offend, who do so immoderately indulge the Appetites causes in Eating and Drinking, that they are drowsy and sleepy even under the Messages sent them from the King of Heaven, and deliver'd them by his Ambassadors, the Preachers of his Word. No, the End of all Pleasure, as well as of Recreations, is to render us not less, but more vigorous and lively in the Service of God, and the proper Business of our Calling: Which brings me,* Lastly, *To consider Recreative Pleasures, and to shew you what they are, in what Sence, and how far we are to Renounce those sort of Pleasures.* Now these are meerly of a middle, and of an indifferent Nature. They are neither wholly Mental, nor altogether Bodily Pleasures, but may be either. And they are neither necessarily Good, nor Evil, but either one, or other, according as they are used: For when the Mind has been long intent upon Study and Meditation, it may be very convenient to Unbend it, by giving our

Recreative Pleasures of a middle and indifferent Nature.



our selves some Bodily Diversion, as Walking, Riding, or other innocent Recreation. And when the Body has been long fatigued and wearied with Labour, it is requisite to give it Ease; and it is no wise hurtful, either to Soul or Body, to fall into a chearful, provided it be an innocent Conversation. And indeed the moderate use of innocent Pleasures and Recreations is both useful and necessary. It enlivens Nature, briskens up our Spirits, and renders us more able to set again about serious Business and Employment. For to intermix no Gratifications, nor Diversions with our more serious Affairs, makes the Mind unactive, dull, and uselefs.

But *Recreations*, the most innocent of 'em, are to be *moderately* and *sparingly* us'd by every Christian; for he that shall much indulge himself in the allow'd Pleasures of the World, shall quickly bring himself into a Frame of Spirit, that will not easily endure *The most innocent thereof are to be sparingly used.* Patience, Self-denial, and Mortification, and other the more difficult and considerable Parts of Religion. Ease and Diversions soften the Sinews, dissolve the Nerves, and are apt to render us Nice, and Delicate, and Effeminate, a Temper the most unsuitable for any Souldier, because it will utterly indispose him for Military Severities. Ease and Pleasure therefore must be warily Indulg'd to, by the Souldier of JESUS, in whose Warfare there are both Conflicts and Severities, far surpassing the hardest, which other Wars engage us in.

No, If you will become Excellent in Religion, nay, keep but within the Bounds of Innocence, you must innure your selves much to Christian Severity and Reservedness; and the most harmless of this World's Delights are to be more rarely us'd, than is commonly thought of. He that constantly eats a full Meal, will not endure a Day of Fasting; and he that does not sometimes deny himself in lawful Enjoyments, will be hardly able to Resist a Temptation to immoderate Gratifications. But however, no Man should make Sports his Business, nor Pastimes his Employment, no more than Cordials his Drink, nor Sauces his Meat. *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven; there is a time to weep, as well as a time to laugh; a time to mourn, as well as a time to dance,* Eccl. 3. 1. 4. And therefore such, who think they have nothing else to do with their Time, must consider, that they have that precious Talent given 'em to greater Ends, than to waste it in Divertisments.

Nay, and those whose ample Fortunes in the World put them above the common Condition of Mankind, and are not to eat of their Bread in the sweat of their Brows, need not live by a Profession, and a Calling, would do well to consider, that the greatest part of their Time ought to be laid out in doing Good in the World; in being Useful and Beneficial to the Society whereof they are Parts and Members. In enquiring into the Necessities of their poorer Brethren; in contriving Ways and Means, both to Employ and Relieve 'em. And above all, in promoting Religion, and the Honour of God amongst Men, so far at least, as their own Authority and Power reaches, whether in their Families, or amongst their Tenants, Neighbours and Dependants. And these are Employments, which will yield both Satisfaction here, and will be

rewarded with eternal Joys hereafter. These are Employments and Pleasures both, and (which Pleasures seldom do) will turn to good Account hereafter. And thus I have at length finish'd all that I think necessary to say to you, concerning Renouncing either the *World* in general, or those particular *Good things*, into which it is divided, *viz.* The *Riches*, *Honours*, and the *Pleasures* of it. There was great variety of useful Matter to be consider'd under these several Heads, and therefore I have been the longer upon 'em: I shall be more short upon the rest. The next of which are,

*The Evils of the World, are Poverty, Disgrace, & Affliction.* Secondly, The *Evils* of the World, *viz.* *Poverty*, *Disgrace*, and *Afflictions*: These are opposite to the other *Goods*, and they are Instruments, whereby Satan, our great Adversary, does attack us, when the other fail him, as is eminently seen in the Case of *Job*, Chap. 1, 2.

But these are not so successful to Ruine us, as those, which are call'd the *Good things* of the World, commonly are. There is less Variety in the ways wherein these do tempt us. And we do not open the Gates of our Souls to these, as we do to the Enjoyments of this World: But do rather fortify our selves against them. However there are Temptations in these also, and I will consider 'em as briefly as I can, and how they are to be Resisted by us. To proceed then,

*Poverty and Afflictions, instead of Temptations to Sin, and Hindrances to Vertue, do very often prove Mortifiers of Vice, and the great occasions of a holy Life.*

First, As to *Poverty* and *Afflictions*; (for I shall not consider these Two altogether apart, the Temptations that either give us, being much the same) These indeed instead of Temptations to Sin, and Hindrances to Vertue, do very often prove Mortifiers of Vice, and the great occasions of a Holy Life. For besides that in a State of Adversity and Want, we are not so subject to Pride, Insolence, and a Contempt of Religion; nor so liable to Luxury, Ambition, and Covetousness, and many other Sins, which are too often the Effects of a prosperous and flourishing Condition: The divers sorts of Afflictions and Adversities, as Sickness, Loss of Goods, and of Friends, Poverty and Want, and the like, are naturally Advantageous, and do mightily tend to the Encrease of many the most precious Graces in the sight of God, as might be easily made appear. These wean us from the World, and instead of *Setting our affections on things below*, they do cause us to *put our affections on things above*. Seeing the Vanity, Emptiness, Transitoriness, and great Inconstancy of this World's Enjoyments, we are apt to thirst after those Permanent, Certain, and Everlasting Joys, prepared in Heaven for us. When Afflictions, and Want, and all other Hopes and Expectations fail us, we do then usually betake our selves to God, for Comfort and Support. And thus drawing nigh unto God we become acquainted with him, and he then vouchsafes us some Tastes of spiritual Delights and Pleasures. And then having Experienc'd the ineffable Satisfaction, communicated to Pious and Humble Souls in their Devotions, and Religious Exercises, we become Heavenly-Minded, weary of this World, *And desirous to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.* Thus, I say, Afflictions and Adversities, are many times, next under God's Grace, great Helps to Piety and Devotion.

Never-

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Nevertheless they are alſo very often great Temptations to many Sins and Impieties, and as ſuch Satan does uſe 'em. They are apt to breed in us Impatience and Diſcontent, and Envy at the outward Felicity of the Wicked. And Poverty in particular, when it meets with Minds ill-diſpos'd, and not ſeaſon'd with Principles of Vertue and Honeſty, Tempts 'em to Fraud and Theft. And generally when Perſons labour under Neceſſities and Wants, they think they have enough to do to provide Neceſſaries for Themſelves and Families; that they may therefore diſpenſe with the Exerciſes of Religion, and that it is enough for the Rich Ones to frequent the publick Worſhip and Sacraments. But in the

First Place, it behoves ſuch, who labour under Poverty, or any Kind of Affliction, to beware they be not Tempted to Impatience and Diſcontent. And there is little Reaſon we ſhould be Tempted thereby into theſe Sins; for, in good Truth, theſe Kind of Sufferings, in moſt Men's Caſes, are Tokens of God's Fatherly Love and Kindneſs, and of his Ordering all things for our Good. So the Apoſtle, Heb. 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he chaſteth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.* This is as great a Paradox to Fleſh and Blood, as it is to a Child to be under the Diſcipline of the Rod and Ferula; to either of which, *No Chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be Joyous, but Grievous: Nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteouſneſs to them, which are exerciſed thereby,* ver. 11. Theſe afflicting Providences tend to mortify our Vanity, and to take of our Confidences in worldly Things, which the Soul of Man in Affluence and Abundance is extreamly ſubject to, and than which there is ſcarcely a more ſinful Temper of Mind: Such Reaſon had David Thankfully to Acknowledge God's Goodneſs in 'em: *I know O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me,* Pſal. 119. 75. And ver. 67. he profeſſes, *That before he was afflicted he went aſtray; but now, ſays he, I have kept thy word.*

Secondly, Thoſe in the worſt of Circumſtances, muſt not Envy the outward Felicity of the Wicked. The Pſalmiſt declares, Pſ. 73. *Thoſe, in the 2, 3. 5. That his Feet had almoſt gone, and that his Steps had well nigh ſlipt,* upon this occaſion; *For I was Envious,* ſays he, *at the Fooliſh, when I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked, that they were not in Trouble, neither were they Plagued like other Men.* But what was the Conſequence of this their Proſperity, and Freedom from Afflictions? Why that Pride *compaſſed them as a Chain, and that Violence cover'd them as a Garment; they ſet their Mouth againſt the Heavens, and their Tongue walked through the Earth;* that is, they became horridly Wicked and Profane upon it, ver. 6. 9. And are theſe Men to be Envy'd then? No, *Go into the Sanctuary,* as this Pſalmiſt did, that is, conſult Religion, and you will underſtand their End, *that ſurely they are ſet in ſlippery Places; and that God will caſt them down into Deſtruction,* ver. 17, 18. *Wherefore fret not thy ſelf, becauſe of Evil-doers, neither be thou Envious againſt the workers of Iniquity,* Pſal. 37. 1.

Thirdly, In caſe of Poverty in particular, *You muſt be infinitely careful, leaſt to reſcue your ſelf out of it, you be Tempted to Fraud, and eſpecially to Stealing and Purloining.* Poverty is indeed an Evil in it ſelf, and it may be Avoided by us, provided it be by lawful Means.

Nevertheless they are often great Temptations to many Sins & Impieties.

I. It behoves thoſe, who labour under Poverty, or any kind of Affliction, to beware of Impatience and Diſcontent.

II. Thoſe, in the worſt of Circumſtances, muſt not envy the outward Felicity of the Wicked.

III. A Perſon that is Poor, muſt be infinitely careful



least to Rescue himself out of it, he is tempted to Fraud, especially to stealing and Purloining.

And it is a Man's Duty indeed, by all honest ways, to rescue himself out of such an ill Condition; as by Labour and Industry in an honest Calling, to Relieve One from Want, and Cold, and Nakedness; and to suffer any Hardships, rather than to run into Debt, and to prevent Imprisonment. But however, whatever Distresses you shall fall into, you must Resolve with Job thus, 27. 2, 3. 6, 7. *As God liveth, who hath taken away my Judgment, and the Almighty, who hath vexed my Soul; All the while my Breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my Nostrils, I will not remove my Integrity from me; My Righteousness I will hold fast, and will not let it go; my Heart shall not Reproach me so long as I live.*

Nor Lastly, must any think that because they are Poor, they are e'rely, must any the more disengag'd from the Service of God, and their Attendance upon him in all the Parts of Divine Worship, Prayers, Sacraments, and the Hearing of the Word. But rather, because of their Poverty, they may be expected, in reason, to be more Frequent, and more Devout in Holy Exercises; for the less they have of outward Comforts, the more reason they have to provide themselves of Spiritual Consolations, that they may not be Miserable in both Worlds: And since this World Frowns upon 'em, to secure to themselves those infinitely more Valuable Treasures in Heaven, to which the meanest Cottager stands as fair a Candidate, as the greatest Nobleman. And, indeed, such is the Regard our Saviour has to 'em, that he made it a peculiar Mark of his being the Messiah, that *The Poor had the Gospel Preached unto them*, Matth. 11. 5. And so much for Poverty and Affliction, those Evils, which are Oppos'd to Riches and Pleasures.

In what sense, and how far we must Renounce Disgrace, and the Temptations it gives us.

The Last of the World's Evils is *Disgrace*, and this is Opposite to the Honours of it. Now *Disgrace* is a thing, which Humane Nature is extremely sensible of: And if it be generally a matter of Disgrace, to profess true and serious Religion, it is wonderful how Men will shrink from it, who in their own Minds have strong Convictions of it, and good Affections towards it. It was the Fear of this *Disgrace*, which made *Nicodemus* come to our Saviour by Night, Joh. 7. 50. And tho' Many of the chief Rulers also Believed on him, yet, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue, for they loved the Praise of Men, more than the Praise of God, Joh. 12. 42, 43. that is, They valued their Reputation with Men, and their Places and Posts of Honour, more than the Testimony of, and Reputation with, God himself.

But as the True Religion is here openly Profest amongst us; and generally it receives no Disgrace heartily to Espouse it, and to Live up to it; but is indeed a matter of Disgrace to do the contrary, except it be with some profligate Debauchees of our Age: If it happen that you should Fall into their Company and Acquaintance (which God preserve you from :) So the Temptations of this Nature, which they will give you, to cool you towards the serious Profession, and Practice of Religion, will be Consider'd hereafter, when I come to speak of the wicked World, and the Temptations, which Arise from thence:

And thus I have consider'd, and laid before you, as the World in General, and the Good Things thereof in Particular, viz. *Riches, Honours, and Pleasures*: So on the contrary, the Opposite Evils of it, *Poverty,*

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Poverty, Disgrace, and Afflictions; and have Discover'd to you, the various Temptations each of 'em do give you, and how you are to Renounce and Resist 'em. And now it only remains,

Lastly, That I do the like, and consider also some Things therein of a middle Nature, viz. The Callings, Conditions of Life, and the Cares of this World, which are the Appurtenances of it, and afford great matter of Temptation and Tryal to us therein: And in what Sence, and how far you are also to Renounce each of these, I will endeavour to shew you.

And, First, Let us consider the Callings of the World, and what Temptations they give us, in what Sence, and how far we must Renounce and Resist them. Now a Calling is some settled Course of Life, wherein a Person employs himself in some Business, such as Providence has fitted him with Abilities for, and which he is Called and Appointed unto, to employ himself therein to the Honour of God, and to his own, and the publick Good. And there is no Man, nor Woman, if not utterly disabled in Body and Mind, who ought not to be of some such Calling: That is,

In the first place, every Man ought in a settled Course of Life to betake himself to some Business. Adam, even in the State of Innocence was Enjoyn'd to Dress and keep the Garden, or e're he could Freely eat of every Tree thereof, Gen. 2. 15, 16. And since his Fall, it is as well the Duty, as it is the Curse of all his Posterity, that In the sweat of our Brows we must eat of our Bread, Gen. 3. 19. So that every Child of Adam must now with great Industry and Application Employ himself, in order to obtain the Necessaries or Conveniencies of this Life. It was indeed from the very Beginning, and even in Paradise it self, our Duty to be Employ'd; but it is now both our Duty and Punishment, that we must Employ our selves, even to the taking of Pains, every Man in his proper Calling.

And that Calling, which every Man is to employ his Time in, must be such, as Providence has fitted him with Abilities for. As God hath distributed to every Man, as the Lord hath Called every one, so let him walk, 1 Cor. 7. 17. "God hath distributed to every Man some proper Gift or other; and therefore every Man must glorify God in some peculiar Calling, or other.

And to whatsoever particular Calling any Man's peculiar Abilities do fit him, to that he is to look upon himself, as preparatively Call'd, or Appointed by God; and lawful Authority in Church, or State is to determine his Call. God does not ordinarily himself Point out any Person by an expresse Designation, as he Called Bazeleel and Aboliab by Name, to do the Work of the Tabernacle, Exod. 31. 2. But he distributes his Talents variously to all Persons, on some he bestows the Gifts of Honours and Fortunes, as to Magistrates and Gentlemen; to some the Gifts of Good Parts and Learning, as to Scholars, of whatsoever Profession; and to some Skill in Trade, and in Arts, as to Dealers and Artificers; and to the Inferior and Poorer sort of Men he gives Health and Limbs, and whatever fits 'em for Toil and Labour. And to some he gives the whole Ten Talents to Trade withal to their Master's Use, that is, Authority, Riches, Learning, Skill in Business, and Strength of Body and Mind; and accordingly of all he will require an Account



how they have Employ'd their Talents: *For unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required, Luk. 12. 48. And the unprofitable Servant shall be cast into outer darkness, Matth. 25. 30.*

*To whatso-  
ever Calling  
he is appoint-  
ed, he must  
employ him-  
self therein to  
God's Glory,  
and his own,  
and the pub-  
lick Good.*

Lastly, whatever Calling any Person is appointed to by the Divine Providence, he must Employ himself therein to the Glory of God, and to his own, and the Publick Good. In the first place to the Glory of God, for that is to be the main End of *whatever we do, 1 Cor. 10. 31.* and also to his own, and his Families Good; *For he that provides not for his own, especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.* And also, as every Man is a Member of the Body Politick, he is bound to employ his Time, and Parts, and Pains for its Welfare; for God requires, that *As every Man has received the Gift, that accordingly they should Minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God, 1 Pet. 4. 10.* And no Member of Church, or State, of what Rank, or Quality soever he be, but must Employ, or Interest himself for the Publick Good; *For God hath so temper'd the Body, or Humane Societies, together, that the Members should have the same care one of another; and whether one Member suffers, he would have all the Members suffer with it, as in the Natural Body; or one Member be Honour'd, he would have all the Members rejoice with it, 1 Cor. 12. 24, 25, 26.* So that it is necessary you see, that every Person should betake himself to some Calling, or Business.

And now the Question will be, What is to be Renounced, with respect to the Callings of this World.

## I.

*All Persons must renounce such Callings and Professions as are directly sinful and wicked.* And, First, *It behoves all Persons utterly to Renounce such Callings and Professions of Men in the World, as are directly sinful and wicked:* Such are Bards, Pimps, Juglers, Conjurers, and the like Impious ways of living, whereby some Wretches do so notoriously Minister to the Devil's Kingdom, and so directly promote the Ruine of Souls, that to Name 'em, is to Condemn 'em; and there need be no more said to render 'em odious to all those, who have any the least degrees of vertuous Principles remaining in their Souls. I shall only tell you, that the Guilt contracted by these is so exceeding Great, and a sufficient Repentance for Crimes so very Black, so near to impossible, that you must so far Renounce 'em, as to Detest; the very thoughts of Embarking your selves ever in these, or any other Callings, whereby Sin is immediately and necessarily serv'd, and the Damnation of those Souls, for whom Christ dyed, so directly procur'd.

## II.

*Such as tend to the Hurt, not the Good of the Publick.* Secondly, *It concerns all Persons to Renounce all such Callings, as tend to the Hurt, not the Good of the Publick.* The Publick Good is the great End of all the divers Callings of Men, as you will see *1 Cor. 12.* And consequently nothing ought to be took up, as a Calling, which *Impoverishes, or Corrupts the Manners of a People.* And upon this Account therefore I shall not doubt to Arraign, and I wish the Magistrate would Universally Condemn, the Calling of such, who keep *Tipling-houses* meerly to harbour Vagabonds and loose People; and to draw Men into Riot and Excess, to the great Impoverishing of many Families, and the Creating of scandalous Breaches betwixt Husbands and their Wives. An Inn-Keeper, whose House is well situated for the Entertainment of the Traveller, upon his lawful



lawful Occasions, is of great use in the Commonwealth. And tho' there be more of Temptation in his Calling than most others, yet if he takes care to prevent, as much as possible, all Swearing and Drunkenness within his Doors, all Lewdness and Wantonness amongst his Servants; and will do all he can to discourage Rioting to unseasonable Hours, he will thereby do good Service to God, as well as his Country, by such his Calling, and so Conscientiously manag'd. But your meer *Ale-house-keeping*, where the whole Trade is to inveigle Persons into Ill-husbandry, to the Expence of their Time and Money, and with all the Shifts and Contrivances to detain 'em, when they are got in, is so great a Pest to this Nation; occasions so much Immorality and Licentiousness; so much Swearing and Profaness, Lewdness and Wantonness; such miserable Poverty amongst the lower Rank of House-keepers; such Brawls and Contentions betwixt Husbands and Wives; and yields so much Harbour, and gives so much Encouragement to Thieves and Robbers; that this Calling can hardly be suppos'd taken up in unnecessary Places, by Vertuous and Honest Persons, but is generally the last Reserve of loose and idle Livers, who would never endure to Labour in an honest Employment. And therefore I would not have you, tho' you should be brought into the forest Want, and be pincht with extream Necessity, ever take up so dangerous a Calling: I do say very moderately, so dangerous a Calling; for at best, there is the utmost danger of Ruine to your Innocency therein, and no One sure, who has the least tender Regard for his Soul, will take up such a Calling, where there is but the least Possibility left of escaping the Loss thereof. And in this Rank also, as extreamly Destructive to Religion and Morality, I think I may safely place the *Calling of Players*. I know how Touchy many will be on such Persons account. I shall therefore choose to express my Opinion, concerning their Calling, in the Words of a very Learn'd, and Judicious Bishop of our own Church; who does acknowledge, That "should they be Try'd by the Bench of Fathers, and Councils, of Old; "would have it put to most Voices amongst later Divines, both Popish and Reformed, they would be utterly Cast and Condemn'd; "most holding, not the Calling only, but the very Practice and "Thing it self Unlawful and Damnable: And how Pernicious they are to Religion and Manners, I shall have Occasion to shew hereafter.

Thirdly, *Christians must Renounce all those wicked Arts, whereby some do Abuse the most worthy and useful Callings, to serve their worldly Ends.* And indeed there is no Calling, tho' never so good in it self, but has its Temptations attending it, and Persons of ill Principles and dishonest Minds, will sadly comply therewith. Thus even in the *Ministry*, the most excellent and useful Calling in the World, since such Multitudes *will not endure sound Doctrine*, and few of the Greater sort especially, will without the utmost Indignation brook a Reproof; many are therefore Tempted to Temper their Doctrines to the Humour of their Party; and others to wink at the most scandalous Offences and Immoralities, those great Reproaches of Christianity. But if we should be wholly in telling you your *Priviledges in Christ*, which the most Carnal Minds will love to

III.  
All sinful  
Arts in the  
most useful  
Callings.

hear of, but little in Instructing you in the Duties of Religion, which are so necessary to the gaining of an Interest in him (which some sort of People will call a *Legal Preaching*) we might perhaps thereby make our selves Dear to a Party, but we should be Unfaithful to Christ. So again, should we forbear to Reprove the Envy, the Malice, Pride, Censoriousness, and Covetousness under the Mask of Religion, of the Hypocrite on the one side, or the open and scandalous Profaness and Debaucheries of the Libertine (who calls himself of our Church) on the other, we should be reckon'd amongst those wicked Prophets *Ezek. 13.* who humour'd and flatter'd the Opinions and Vices of God's People, and must expect that heavy Doom pronounc'd against such in that Chapter.

And indeed as every other Calling has its particular Temptations belonging to it: So what is worse, most Men think they may Honestly enough comply therewith, and do think it indeed a necessary part of their Profession so to do. Thus the Lawyer (a very worthy and useful Profession in a Commonwealth, as being that whereby Property, and Right, and Peaceableness should be maintained amongst Men) may be Tempted perhaps, to think it a Part of his Profession to encourage Strife, and foment Differences; and that the Malice and Revenge, the Wrath and Bitterness; the Slanders and Evil-speakings; the Strife and Contentions, which are other Men's Sins, must be his Livelihood: And that he must make himself Acquainted by Drinking hard, with the worst sort of People, that he may gain an Interest himself in 'em, and get into Business. So likewise the Tradesman will plead, that the Importunity of Customers, who will certainly beat down the Price of his Commodities, as low as they can, does make it necessary by Protestations, and Equivocations, and Lyes, to set off his Wares to the best advantage. And how few are Country-Dealers, who do not think it necessary (or they cannot pay a hard Rent, and maintain a Family) to take advantage of the Ignorance, or Necessity of their Neighbours; and not only to conceal the Defects, but by plain downright Lying and Avouching, that their Beast is upright and sound, put it off for more than it is Worth. Thus some Men, of all Professions, will think they must do, or else they cannot Live. And indeed, if Men could not get a Livelihood, but in a way and trade of Sinning, Persons of Callings, and Professions, and Dealers in the World, would ly under a shrewd Temptation.

But tell me, must Men sell their Souls to the Devil for ever, for the Gains here, we know not how soon we must leave? We count *Esaú* a foolish, as well as profane Person, who in Extremity of Hunger, sold his Birthright for a Mess of Pottage, *Gen. 25. 33, 34.* And what is that Christian, who shall sell his Eternal Inheritance for a Thing, in comparison, of no Value?

But I can see no necessity of foregoing a Livelihood, or of yielding to the Temptations of a Calling. Indeed, if by a Livelihood Men did not mean living in Superfluity, Vanity, Luxury, which neither God, nor Nature has made necessary to any Man's Being, nor indeed Well-being in the World: If they meant no more than getting an honest, and moderate Provision, suitable to the Station and Condition Providence has plac'd 'em in, I do not know, but generally  
Men

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Men do better provide for themselves, by plain and honest Dealing, than by serving their Interests, by any sinful Art, or Cunning whatsoever. I do believe it is a true Proverb, generally speaking, that *Honesty is the best Policy*; and Men Thrive, tho' but slowly by it, yet better and surer than by Cheating and Over-reaching. And it is almost every One's Observation, That a little Substance honestly got is a Comfort to the Owners, whilst the Estate that is ill got waits like Butter in the Sun, and derives down a Curse upon those on whom it descends.

But however, tho' it be not so, that Honesty is the best way to Thrive, and tho' your Temptations should be never so great, and your Wants never so pressing, you must suffer that Want, or suffer worse. And you would do well to consider, that those who will rather suffer Want here, than by sinful Ways provide a Relief, shall be sure not to want the Love, and Mercies of God hereafter, and that will abundantly Recompence for all defect of Advantages in this World.

Fourthly, You must Renounce all Levity, and Desultory Skipping from one Calling to another. This may seem rather a Politick, than Religious Precept, because in common Observation it is seldom seen, that the Man of several Trades and Callings does Thrive, and that the *Rolling Stone* never gathers *Moss*. But it is an Instruction, which is also of a Religious Importance, for 1 Cor. 7. 20. *Every Man is commanded to Abide in the same Calling, wherein he was called.* And tho' it may be Lawful to lay down One, and to "take up another Profession, or Trade, when either absolute Necessity enforceth it, or lawful Authority enjoineeth it; or a Concurrence of weighty Circumstances faithfully, and discreetly, and soberly laid together, seemeth to require it; as the Judicious Bishop *Sanderfon* Stateth this Case: Yet this must be done, as he says, with all due Caution; as First, not out of Lightness, and Unsettledness; nor Secondly, out of the Greediness of a Covetous, or Ambitious Lust; nor Thirdly, out of Sullenness, or Discontentedness at our present Condition; nor Lastly, out of Envy against our Neighbour, that liveth by us.

But above all, that Change of Callings is to be Renounced, as the highest Profaneness, when Laymen and Tradesmen, nay, Women (as amongst the Quakers, so expressly contrary to the Commands of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 14. 34.) do Sacrilegiously usurp the sacred Office of the Ministry, and set up for Teachers without a lawful Call, or Ordination thereunto. Nor is there any Force in what they'll pretend, from Rev. 1. 6. where it is said of all Christians in general, *That Christ hath made them Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father*; for the same is spoke, Exod. 10. 6. of the whole Jewish Nation, that *They should be a Kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation.* And yet we find that the Priesthood was so much a separated Office amongst them, and so dangerous to be Usurpt, that *Korah* and his Company paid dearly for Attempting it, Numb. 16. as also *Uzziah*, as you will see, 2 Chron. 26. 16. &c. The reason of that high Expression, Rev. 1. 6. wherein Christians in general are call'd Priests, is the same as in Exod. For as the whole Jewish Nation were there styl'd a *Kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation*, with respect to the Pagan

IV.

*All Levity and Desultory Skipping from one Calling to another.*



World, from whom they were to be as much separated by a peculiar Holiness, as the Priesthood amongst 'em was from the People. So we Christians, such is our Holy Calling, are to be as much separated and distinguished from Jews and Gentiles both, by our Holy Living, as the Gospel Ministry, are by a sacred Character, from the rest of Christian People.

No certainly, all those of the Laity, who usurp the Office of the Ministry should learn Sobriety, and to keep themselves within the proper Bounds and Limits of their Callings, considering that equally now, as in the Jewish Church, *The Priest's lips should keep Knowledge, and that they should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts, Mal. 27.*

V.  
Any Calling  
whatsoever is  
to be declin'd  
for which a  
Person is not  
Qualified,  
both by Edu-  
cation, Abi-  
lities, and  
Inclinations.

Fifthly, And that you may not lightly, and with a worse Imputation than that of Inconstancy, change your Calling; *Decline that Calling whatever, how Creditable, or how Profitable soever it be, for which you are not Qualify'd both by Education, Abilities, and Inclination.* The great Fault in this respect is commonly the Parents, who *Predestinate*, as it were, their Children to such Callings, as they please themselves, without consulting those other Requisites now named, to make them Excellent and Useful to themselves, or others therein; and this is the reason, that so many mis-carry in their Callings, to their own Ruine and Disgrace, and the Disappointment and Damage of others in the Business they undertake.

Especially  
Callings of  
great Import-  
ance, such as  
the Ministry.

And according, as is the Importance of any Calling, accordingly does it the more concern Persons, both for their own sakes, and the World's, that they decline such as they are not fitted for by a *suitable Education*, by *competent Abilities*, and *Gifts*, and by a *strong Inclination thereunto*. Now the *Ministry* is a Calling of the vastest Consequence in the World, even the Salvation of many Souls, depending upon a Man's being duly Qualify'd thereto. There ought in the first place to be a suitable Education, in those *Schools of the Prophets*, our *Universities*, given to such as are Candidates for it, that they may be prepar'd thereto by the Knowledge of those learn'd Languages, wherein the Inspir'd Writers did Pen the Holy Scriptures, and by many other Arts and Sciences, which are Hand-maids to Divinity, and can there only be sufficiently attain'd to. There ought next to be great Abilities and Gifts, both Natural Parts, and Divine Graces, and a good share of all sorts of Learning acquir'd by much Study, and great Industry, to make an useful Divine; there being no one Profession in the World, which requires to its Perfection, such an universal Knowledge, as *Theology* does. And to all these there must be added strong *Inclinations* to the Holy Office; *Inclinations* to it, not upon the account of the Preferment, and Dignities that attend it, but for the Works sake; *Inclinations* indeed to be an Instrument of God's Glory, and of the Salvation of Men's Souls therein. And now, if a Person of no good Abilities, or Gifts should be *determin'd* to the Ministry, it is a Sacrilegious Profaneness of equal Guilt, as it is Impiety in some Parents, who think such of the most promising Parts amongst their Children, an Offering too good for the Lord. Or if a Person of a suitable Education, and of great Abilities, that fit him for it, should enter into it with an unwilling Mind, is often too great  
a sign

a sign of un sanctify'd Affections, that would be for greater Liberty and Gaiety, than the Gravity and Seriousness of his Profession will allow him; and the Fop should be counted unworthy of it. Or lastly, if there be never so strong Inclinations to be a Teacher, without the Preparations of an University Education, and learned Abilities, as well as Divine Graces, it shews the Person to be One of those, who *Desiring to be Teachers of the Law, understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed,* 1 Tim. 1. 7.

And indeed in any Calling whatsoever, there must be a joint concurrence of every one of these fore-mention'd Qualifications; for if any one of 'em be wanting, that Person will be unsuccessful in his Calling; insomuch that if there be never so suitable an Education and good Abilities, if there be wanting that one other Requisite of strong Inclinations to such a Course of Life, the Business of it will be carried on with *Sloth and Negligence*, which is the

Sixth Thing, that must be Renounced, as to any Calling. Idleness has the same Effect in any other Calling, as Solomon observ'd it had in the Husband-man's, concerning whom he tells us, *That going by the Field of the Slothful, and by the Vineyard of the man void of Understanding, lo it was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered the face thereof,* Prov. 24. 30, 31. Thereby the Understanding of the Scholar is over-spread with Ignorance; the Manners of the Gentleman with Barbarity and Savageness; and Poverty and Nakedness do enter, through Sloth, the Houses of Tradesmen. But on the other side, how comfortable are the Fruits of Industry, either in Man, or Woman? Particularly as to the Woman's Industry, there is such an Account given thereof, *Prov. 31.* from the 10 ver. to the End of that Chap. as shews the mighty Happiness to Husband, Children, and Servants, where such a One is the Mistress of the Family; and her Character ought to be got by Heart, by every Person of her Sex. And therefore the Effects of Sloth being so dismal and miserable; but the Fruits of Industry so very advantageous and comfortable, according as the Wise-man advises, *Ecc. 9: 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.*

Well, but it is enough you'll say, for those to be Industrious, who are to *Live by their Calling*: But as for such, who enjoy a sufficiency and plenty of the Necessaries, Conveniencies and Superfluities of this World; what occasion is there that they should be Industrious: For as it is commonly said, *What is a Gentleman, but his Pleasures?*

But give me leave to Answer in the words of an excellent Person, that if this be true, "If a Gentleman be nothing else but this, then truly he is a sad Piece, the most inconsiderable, the most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched Creature in the World: If it be his Priviledge to do nothing, then it is his Priviledge to be Good for nothing, to be a meer Weight and Burthen upon the Earth; nay the Pest and Plague of Mankind, since the Soul of Man is that active Power, that if it does not actuate and employ a Man in doing Good, it will certainly in doing Mischief: So that to say thus of the Gentleman, or Man of Fortunes, is highly to Reproach him. But the Contrary is most certain.

And no Man, be he in never so flourishing a State and Condition, must give himself up to Idleness, as being One of the

VI.

Idleness in any Calling is to be renounced.

Idleness not allowable, no not in Gentlemen.



greatest Temptations in the World to Sin, and in it self a Life very displeasing to God.

*It is one of the greatest Temptations in the World to Sin.* Idleness, I say, is one of the greatest Temptations in the World to Sin. So great a Temptation indeed it is, that the idle Person Tempts the Devil to come and Tempt him. That wicked Spirit Continually walketh about the Earth, seeking whom he may devour; and spying a Person to be Idle, he infallibly lies down before him. He musters up all his Forces to beleaguer that Man, sends for the like idle and licentious Persons as himself, and these with all possible Allurements inveigle him to join with 'em in their wicked Courses.

And his Mind being taken up with no honest Cares, the Devil throws into his Soul a Thousand ill Thoughts, and base Designs, and lewd Imaginations to corrupt him, and make him yield. And the greatest of Men and Saints, have been Overcome meerly by being found Idle, as we have an eminent Instance in David, 2 Sam. 11. 2. *Who walking on the roof of his House*, his Mind then roving, and being untactt from honest Cares, that Temptation seiz'd on him, whereby he was plung'd into that woful Miscarriage, in the Matter of *Uriah*, which did create him so much Sorrow, did make such a Spot in his Life, as was never wash'd off, no not with his Tears of Repentance: So excellent was the Advice of the Father; *Be always doing something, that the Devil may never find thee Idle.*

*And is it self a very great Sin.*

Nor is the Idleness of Persons in a plentiful and flourishing Condition, *in it self less a Sin*, than it is a Temptation to other Sins. These are the Persons, who have Talents given 'em, and their Idleness is exprest by *Hiding their Talents in the Earth*, Mat. 25. 25. which how great a Sin it is, is evident from our Saviour's severe Menaces thereupon, calling such an idle Person a *Wicked and slothful Servant*, and commanding him to be cast, because an unprofitable Servant, *into outer darkness, where should be weeping and gnashing of teeth*, ver. 30. It is remarkable, that here the wicked Servant is so severely Doom'd, not for mis-employing, but for being Idle, and not employing his Talent: So that no Man's Condition, be it never so Plentiful, will excuse him in Idleness.

*Lastly, no Man must live above his Calling.*

*The last Thing to be Renounced, with reference to a Calling, is the Living above it.* This is what the Vanity and Pride of many, both Gentlemen, Tradesmen, and others, do Tempt 'em to; but the Issue thereof is in a short time to be Needy and Borrowing, and consequently Contemptible, and to meet with Scorn instead of that Respect they seek, by making an outward Appearance and Flourish. But the worst of it is, when Men are of this Humour, to live above their Calling, in order to maintain their Port and Pride, they are forc'd, if Gentlemen, to oppress their Tenants; if Tradesmen to cheat and overreach their Customers, and to use all the evil Arts of Getting. And as to the latter, when they so far scorn the Meanness of their Profession, as to throw it aside, it is not seldom, that in the End they take to the High-way, as the only Means of maintaining themselves. In short therefore to prevent the fatal Effects of both these last Evils, Idleness, and living beyond a Man's Calling, my Advice to young Persons is to be Industrious, till such time at least, as they have laid up a Stock, whereby they may afford to live more at Ease, and not to throw off the meanest Calling, till they are able to live Creditably



Creditably without it. And ſo much for the Callings of the World, and what is to be Renounced with Relation to them.

Secondly, *Let us conſider amongſt thoſe Things of the World of a middle Nature, the different Conditions and States of Men therein.* And the greateſt Part are in the State, either of *Maſters*, or of *Servants*. And the whole World are either *Single*, or *Married Perſons*.

And Firſt, as to the State and Condition of a Maſter, there are very great Advantages and Opportunities, which the Head of a Family has of doing Good amongſt thoſe of his Houſhold; inſomuch that if he keep up an orderly and religious Diſcipline in his Family, it will be no hard matter for him, ſo to form the Principles and Practices of his Servants and Dependants, as to be able to undertake with *Joſhua*, 24. 15. that he, and his Houſe, ſhall ſerve the Lord.

But yet this, as all other Conditions of Men in this World, is liable to be Abused to great degrees of Diſhonour to God, and Injury to the Souls of Men, as namely when thoſe, who are Maſters do ſo far exceed in their Commands, as to give no leiſure to their Servants to provide for the Good of their own Souls.

But ſuch a Dominion as this muſt be utterly Renounced, and it ſhould be a Thing never heard of amongſt Chriſtians, that a Servant ſhould be ſuch a Slave, as to be treated no better than a Brute: And as Paſture is the only thing provided for the latter, ſo bodily Neceſſaries ſhould be the only thing took care of for the former. No, everyone that will expect *Abraham's* Bleſſing and Favour with God, muſt have *Abraham's* pious Care of the religious Education and Government both of his Children and Servants; concerning whom it is Recorded, that God did Impart unto him a very great ſecret, under the Notion of a ſingular Favour, upon this very Account, That *He knew he would command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, that they ſhould keep the way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment*, Gen. 18. 19. So that when any of you ſhall grow up, or arrive to that Condition, to be the Heads of a Family, this muſt be alſo your Care, and you muſt utterly Renounce the Treating your Servants at that Diſtance, as if they were not Fellow-ſervants with you to the ſame God.

Secondly, *The next Condition, or State of Life in this World to be conſider'd of, is that of Servants.* Now a Servant amongſt Chriſtians, if he be not Barbarouſly and Un-chriſtianly uſ'd, is not the moſt unhappy State: Tho' he has not his Maſter's Liberty, yet if he has leſs of his Licentiousneſs, he is the happier Man. But yet if it falls out ſo, that the Maſter and Family, he happens into, be Diſorderly, Debauched, and Wicked, he is in a State of mighty Temptation, and in great danger of being Corrupted: And therefore

Firſt, *It concerns every Perſon, who is to live by a Service, to Renounce and Refuſe thoſe* (if extream Neceſſity, and want of Better, do not compel him to Accept of ſuch) *where a great deal of Wickedneſs is practiced without Controul, and little of the Fear of God is to be ſeen amongſt Maſters, or Servants.* We do daily pray to God, *Not to lead us into Temptation*, and thoſe who are ſincere in their Prayers, will not voluntarily throw themſelves into ſuch a dangerous place of Temptation, as is a wicked Family; where not only the ordinary Means of Grace, the reading of the word of God, and daily Prayers are wanting: But the Examples of both Head and Members do influence to an Imitation in Lewdneſs, Drunkenneſs, Injuſtice, Curſing, Swearing, and all Impiety;

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and

II.

*Amongſt thoſe things of the World of a middle Nature, the different Conditions and States of Men therein are to be conſidered.*

I.

*A Maſter has great advantages of doing Good.*

*But all that Dominion is to be utterly Renounced amongſt Chriſtians, which treats Servants no better than Slaves and Brutes.*

*The State of Servants not in it ſelf unhappy.*

I.

*It concerns every Perſon, who is to live by a Service, to avoid ſuch where there is neither the means of Religion, nor reſtraints upon Sin.*

and where Profaneness does so far prevail, as to instigate 'em to break their Jest upon Religion and Vertue. Alas! it is a very difficult thing for Youth to be thoroughly season'd with Principles of Vertue, even by all the Instruction and Care of Ministers, Parents, and Masters. How then must it be next to a Miracle, if they fly not out into all manner of Licentiousness, when the Corruption within is heighten'd with the Examples and Encouragements of all about 'em, and those too, Persons upon whose Favour they depend.

II.  
In the most  
Irreligious  
Families a  
Servant shall  
happen into,  
hemust put on  
a stedfast re-  
solution to pre-  
serve his In-  
nocence.

Secondly, But since Idleness and want of Employment does expose a Person to Temptation, even more than such Services; and if Necessity shall force you into those, where little of spiritual Improvement, but all manner of Temptations to Sin, is to be expected: why then with Joseph in the House of Potiphar, Gen. 39. 8. you must put on the most stedfast Resolutions to preserve your Innocence, and must make a Covenant with your Eyes, Ears, and all your Senses, that they do not Offend. And when Divine Providence has dispos'd you there, Divine Grace will not be wanting to your own honest Endeavours, to preserve you from Evil.

III.  
The State of  
Celibacy ad-  
vantagious to  
Devotion, &  
in Times of  
Distress.

Thirdly, The next State, and that wherein the greatest part of Mankind in this World are found, is the State of Celibacy, or the single Life; and St. Paul, speaking to those which are Unmarried, tells 'em, It is Good for them if they Abide so, 1 Cor. 7. 8. and that upon Two Accounts: First at all Times, because of the greater Freedom and Vacancy for Meditation, and Divine Employments therein; He that is Unmarried careth for the Things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: Secondly, and more especially in Times of Persecution, or the Approach of Sufferings coming upon the Church of God, and because of the present, or impendent Distress, ver. 26. But yet this State is the most subject to Unchast Desires, and Lewd Practices, if not powerfully restrain'd by rooted Principles of Vertue. And therefore

This must be  
renounced,  
when Persons  
cannot Con-  
tain.

Even the State of Celibacy it self must be Renounc'd and Forsaken, by those who cannot contain, according to the Advice of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 9. They who cannot contain let them Marry, for it is better to Marry than to Burn: For alas! when Persons Morals are once Corrupted in this Kind, it is very rare, that either Man, or Woman, returns to that just Abomination and Abhorrence, which all Christians ought to have of the very Thoughts and Expressions of Uncleaness, according to that of St. Paul: But Fornication, and all Uncleaness, let it not be once Named amongst you, as becometh Saints; Neither Filthiness, nor Foolish Talking, nor Jestings, which are not convenient, Eph. 5. 3, 4.

Lastly, the  
Married state  
has its Ad-  
vantages.

The last State of Persons I shall here mention, is that of the Married, a State Ordain'd by God, Matth. 19. 4. and the more to be lik'd, that besides the mutual Supports and Comforts afforded to each other therein, many, both Husbands and Wives, do owe their Conversion to Christianity; and from a wicked, to a good Life, to the prudent and discreet Instruction of one, or other, of the Married Couple, 1 Cor. 7. 16. Nevertheless there is Danger in this, as well as in other States. In Times of Distress, they are apt to be Tempters to one another, to sinful Compliances; and at all times are Plung'd into worldly Cares, and He that is Married careth for the Things, that are of the World, 1 Cor. 7. 33. and that too often to the great Hindrance of Religion. And therefore

I.  
All Solicita-  
tions from ei-

First, All Solicitations from either Husband, or Wife, must be utterly Renounc'd, when out of worldly Regards, either He, or She, would disswade



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disfwaide from a Conscientious Discharge of Duty, and a Faithful Confession of any part of Christianity, in which case, we must even Hate *Wife and Children, &c.* Luk. 14. 26. as has been already spoke.

Secondly, And even in the Married State, all those worldly Cares, which choak up, or disturb Religion, must be utterly laid aside, as will be fully shew'd you under the Next, and

Last of those Things pertaining to this World, which afford great matter of Temptation to us, *viz. The Cares thereof.* Now as to the Cares of this World, true it is, we have many worldly Interests and Engagements to mind, we have the Necessities, both of our own Persons, and of those who belong to us, to serve. Nor is any thing prepar'd for us without Industry and Endeavour; so that by the Necessity of our Condition we are, every One of us, more or less, some in one way, some in another, engag'd in worldly Affairs. Hence it is, that some Care about the Things of this World is allow'd us; nay, and indeed we are commanded *to continue in the Calling, wherein God hath set us,* 1 Cor. 7. 20. and we are warn'd, that *we be not slothful in Business,* Rom. 12. 11.

But the great Unhappiness and Sin of many in this difficult case, is this; That a moderate Concern for the Things of this World being Allowable, they are apt to Overwhelm themselves in a multiplicity of Cares: As also to let the Cares of this world to Alienate their Affections from God, and Heavenly Things; and to withdraw their Attention from him, in those Divine Services, they are bound to Pay him. And few, who are far engag'd in Temporal Designs and Cares, know when to Retire from the world, and to throw them off; so as to give themselves a sufficient Time to prepare for a better Life. But as necessary as worldly Cares, are in most men's Circumstances; yet

First, *It becomes Christians to Renounce that Multiplicity of Cares, which distracts their Thoughts, and shews 'em to have no other Aims, but at this World.* And yet so it is, that some Men fill their Heads with innumerable Projects, and do so Overwhelm themselves with Variety of Business, that they do scarcely allow themselves time to Eat and Sleep. But to be in a perpetual Hurry after this World's Goods, and to be so over-solicitous for our future Provision in it, is an Argument of Men's Discontent with that Condition, wherein Providence has plac'd 'em; and of an anxious Fear, they shall not be sufficiently Provided for by God's Blessing, concurring with an honest Industry in their Affairs: And is such a Care, as however it might become Pagans, who knew little of the Doctrine of God's Providence in this Life, and of his Treasures of Bliss, provided for us in another; Yet is infinitely unbecoming Christians, who are thoroughly Instructed in the Divine Providence and Care over us, and his future Provisions for us; and is therefore so strictly forbid us, *Matth. 6.* from the 24th Verse, to the End.

Secondly, *It behoves us Christians so far to Renounce any Worldly Care, as it does Alienate our Affections from God, and Heavenly Things; and withdraw our Attention from him, in the Services we are bound to Pay him, as is too often.* I say, as is too often. For hence it is, that so many do neglect Holy Duties, both Publick and Private, and that they Perform either with so little Devotion. Hence it is, that many come so seldom to Church; or when they do, that they carry themselves in the Performance of Prayer, Praises, and at the Hearing of the Word, with so much Coldness, Laziness, and want of Attention. And hence also it

Bbb 2

*ther of the married Couple must be renounced, which would Perswade to sinful Compliances in times of Distress.*

II.

*And Engage too much in worldly Cares*

*Lastly, the Cares of this World, the last of those Things pertaining to it, in some measure necessary.*

I.

*It becomes Christians to renounce a multiplicity of Cares.*

II.

*Everyworldly Care, so far as it does Alienate our Affections from God, and Heavenly Things.*

is



is, that at Home there is so seldom any Family-Prayers, and Reading of the Scriptures, and good Books. And I wish, *That rising up early, and sitting up late, and eating the Bread of Carefulness*, may not hinder some from Paying any Devotion to God, as much as Privately by themselves, every Morning and Evening. And yet this is the least that can be imply'd in those Precepts of *Luk. 18. 1. Men ought always to Pray*, and *1 Thes. 5. 17. where we are enjoin'd to Pray without ceasing*. And to be Negligent, or Inattentive, through the Incumbrance of worldly Cares, at the Hearing of the Word, was the thing for which our Saviour Reprov'd *Martha*, who was *Cumbring her self with much Serving*, when she ought to have Listen'd to our Saviour's Divine Instructions, as *Mary* did, for which He Commended her, *Luk. 10. 40, 41, 42*. And therefore it behoves every Christian, when he enters into the House of God, or into his own Closet, wholly to lay aside all worldly Cares for that Time, and to say to 'em, as Christ to his Disciples, *Stay you here, whilst I go and Pray yonder*.

Lastly, *All Persons, whether more, or less engag'd in worldly Cares, when grown in Tears, should wholly in a manner throw them off, and Retiring as much as may be from the World, should employ the remainder of their Time in clearing their Accompts with God and Man, and in preparing themselves for the Great Tryal.* And yet it is commonly observ'd, that the farther Men advance in Years, the more Covetous and Worldly they grow; but this is the most unreasonable and absurd Thing, that can be: For what means the Cares of this World, but to provide for our selves, or Posterity? Now as to our selves, the nearer Life draws to an End, the less of temporal Provisions are necessary. And as to Posterity, the best Provision that can be made for them, is what may be enough to be a Foundation for their Industry, and not so much as will dis-engage 'em from Business and Employment; for to leave 'em great Estates, is but to expose 'em to the Temptations of Idleness, Luxury, and the worst of Sins: To which, as all Men in great Possessions are liable, so none more than such, who have been suddenly rais'd by the Covetousness of a worldly Miser. As therefore those Men of Business, who would be counted the only Wise, will not shew themselves in the End the greatest Fools, when they have Advanc'd far in Years, at least-wise, they should look upon that Advice of the Prophet, as particularly directed to them; *Set thy house in order, for thou shalt surely dye, and not live*: Such Men have receiv'd more Talents than others, and therefore they ought to take more time to State their Accompts, that they may come off at the Great Audit, with the Approbation of having been good and faithful Stewards.

In a Word, and to Conclude this Head, *The Consideration of the World*, upon which we have been so long, you would do well to bear those Scriptural Instructions always in Mind, *To set your Affection on things above, and not on things on the Earth*, *Col. 3. 2. Not to Love the World*, *1 Joh. 3. 15. To be Careful for Nothing*, *Phil. 4. 6. And to take no Thought for to Morrow*, *Matth. 6. 34.* The Meaning of which Expressions is, *That we should Love God, and Heavenly Things in the first Place, and Abandon all immoderate Cares concerning Worldly Things.* That we must bestow much more of our Care, how we may Serve God acceptably, and provide for the Immortal Happiness of our Souls, than how to Attain this World's Goods. And in an honest Industry and Endeavour, to Attain a Sufficiency thereof, to carry us thro' this Vale of Misery, we must commit the Success of all our Labours to God, and trust him with the Event, who will take care, *That all things shall work together for Good, for them who Fear him*, *Rom. 8. 20.*

T H E

## Seventeenth Lecture.

First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.

**T**HE Point that we are now upon, being to lay before you the Strength of those Temptations, which do arise, First, *From the World*, Secondly, *From the wicked World*, and Thirdly, *From the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World*: And as to the First, *First*, Having sufficiently discover'd what Temptations to Sin we shall meet with, both from the *World in General*, and the *several Things* therein contain'd, in Particular, I come now,

Secondly, *To give you a Survey likewise too of the wicked World, and to shew you also in what Sence, and how far you are to Renounce the wicked World.* And by the wicked World can be properly meant no other than *wicked Men*, there being no Creature on Earth, besides Man, that is capable of doing any thing morally Good, or Evil, so as to be styl'd from the latter, *Wicked*.

And if you would be farther satisfy'd, who these are, who may be so styl'd; it seems to me, that it is not every Sinner however, that either in the Language of the Scripture, or in common Account, is call'd a *wicked Man*: But it must be some One of a more than ordinary Impiety, so as to approach something near Satan himself in Sin and Wickedness, that can deserve so Black a Character. Now the Devil is often term'd in Scripture *The wicked One*; and particularly *Matth. 13. 19.* he is so styl'd on the account of his Tempting others to Sin. *His catching away the Word which is sown in Men's Hearts*, or his Injecting of vain Thoughts into the Minds of the Hearers, that they may not be Converted by the Preaching of the Gospel: (one of his ways of Tempting us to Sin, as was before shew'd) It is this that gave him that Character of the *wicked One*. And on the very same account of his Tempting the World to Sin, is his great Agent, *Anti-Christ* call'd also, *2 Thel. 2. 8. That wicked One*. He is term'd in the 4 *ver. He that opposeth God*, and here in this 8 *ver.* he is styl'd *The wicked One*, because of his *Coming after the working of Satan with all deceivableness of Unrighteousness*, as it follows, *ver. 9, 10.* that is, because he imitates the Devil by his cunning Tempting of others into Sin, and by deceiving 'em into Unrighteous, Irreligious Courses, he is therefore call'd the wicked One. And upon the same account therefore, as those only are properly wicked Men, who are

II.

*What's meant by the wicked World, and how far, and in what sence we are to renounce it.*

*Thereby is meant such as make it their Business, like that wicked One, the Devil, to Tempt others to Sin.*

guilty of some notorious Crime themselves ; so especially such, who make it any part of their Business to *Corrupt and Tempt* others to Sin, are the wicked Men of the World.

And according to those Degrees of Tempting, of which Men are guilty, are they to be esteemed more, or less *Wicked, and Diabolically so*. Some Men's Temptations are less *Extensive*, and reach no farther than the Neighbourhood, where they are known, and the Company they converse with. But others there are, whose Temptations may reach even unto the utmost Parts of the Earth ; such are those, who propagate and promote by their Writings, or Discourses, Atheistical and Heretical Principles : And such are most of our Modern Writers of Play-Books, and Songs, whose Plays and Poetry seem design'd to nourish Profaneness and Immorality. Now such Temptations as these will extend to all Parts, where things of that Nature shall reach, and will be Temptations in all Ages, so long as there will be found wicked Men like themselves, to propagate and promote the same. The former sort may be compar'd to an Inferior Rank of Evil Spirits, whose Province of doing Mischief is more narrow and confin'd : But the latter are, as it were, Master Devils ; *Like roaring Lions, they are continually walking about the Earth, seeking whom they may devour.*

And now you must heartily Renounce, and Refuse to Conform your selves to those wicked Men, either First, *By becoming Tempters your selves of other People* : Or, Secondly, *By yielding of your selves to be overcome by others Temptations.*

I. First, *You must renounce that Diabolical Wickedness of becoming Tempters your selves of other Persons.* Renounce, do I say ? You must Abhor, Abominate, and Detest this their Wickedness of Corrupting others, and of Tempting 'em to Sin, as being a Practice, that of all others will render you likest to the Devil. And I am sure you would of all things in the World detest this Piece of Villany, if you would but attentively consider that One remarkable place of Scripture, shewing you the high Impiety of such a Wickedness. It is *Acts 13. 8, 9, 10. Elymas the Sorcerer withstood Barnabas and Paul, seeking to turn away the Deputy from the Faith : Then Paul filled with the Holy Ghost, set his Eyes on him, and said, O full of Subtily and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ?* Do you see here with what unusual Indignation, and in what severe Language the Apostle does bespeak this Wretch, meerly upon his Endeavouring to *Tempt the Deputy from the right way of the Lord.*

And surely not without Reason ; for certainly it must be a terrible Consideration to any One, that he has been the Instrument and Cause of another's Damnation. For should such a One ever hereafter return to a right Mind (and he will be infinitely miserable, if he does not) as his Repentance, if it be sincere, will make him a Lover, not only of his own, but of other men's Souls : So what Anguish will it give him, to think, that 'tis to be fear'd, there are now those in Hell Flames, whom his ill Example, or vicious Conversation, or base and corrupting Flatteries in wicked Courses, or Discouragements to Vertue, or Encouragements to Sin, have sent there, never to be Retriev'd.

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LECT. XVII. Concerning the Temptations of the World. 195

It is an Injury to men's Souls, in some Cases hardly ever, in others impossible to be Repair'd. If his Temptations have been of that sort, as to reach no farther than he was Known, or was Con-  
 versant, a very Eminent, and very signal Repentance may, in some measure, put a stop to the Contagion thereof; so that they spread no farther (tho' not that altogether, for some perhaps, whom he has Corrupted, will never be Reclaim'd, tho' he be never so great a Penitent, and Labour himself never so much their Conversion :) But if his Temptations have been of that more spreading and lasting Kind, now spoke, and he has been One, that has *Wrote Ill Books, been a Broacher of Pestilent Heresies, an Author of lewd Plays, or wanton and prophane Verse,* the Mischief and Poyson of such Temptations do fly beyond his Recalling; and tho' he may Burn 'em with his own Hands, yet others will Rake 'em out of the Ashes. And it is the Opinion of some of the Ancients, that such Temptations as these, will affect his Happiness even in Heaven it self; insomuch that according as the Mischief thereof does daily spread, and more do continue to be Damn'd thereby, proportionably such a One will still fall thereupon lower, and lower in Glory. I know nothing in Reason, or Religion, that contradicts this Opinion. However it be, certainly it is the highest Misfortune can befall any One, that he is, or ever has been amongst that Rank of Sinners, whom the Scripture does so peculiarly Stile the *wicked*, and that because of their so near Resemblance to the Tempter himself. These are the Persons *by whom Offences come*, and it is a terrible Threatning, that of our Saviour's, Matth. 18. 6. to such, *Whoso shall offend one of these little Ones, which believe in me*, that is, any-wise Tempt, Gall, Discourage, drive from the Faith and Practice of a Christian, any the meanest Person that comes to me; whoso shall do this, *It were better for him, that a Mill-stone were hanged about his Neck, and he were cast into the midst of the Sea*: So that of all things in the World, it concerns you, to take care, ye never become Tempters of others to Sin, and either to omit that, which is Good, or to commit that, which is Evil.

Secondly, *Nor does it less concern you to refuse Conforming your selves to wicked Men, when they shall Tempt you*; which they will do, when either First, by their ill Examples, they shall Influence you; or Secondly, by falling into their Company, they shall Entice you; or Thirdly, by their Flatteries they shall Corrupt you; or Fourthly, by their Discouragements to Vertue, and Encouragements to Sin they shall Engage you; or Fifthly, by their Perswasions they would Prevail upon you; or Lastly, by their Customs would Constrain you to Sin. And I will shew you, how by all Means you must Renounce, or Refuse to Conform your selves unto their evil Ways, in any of these Cases.

And, First, *That you must renounce, or refuse to Conform your selves to the evil Examples of wicked Men, which would Influence you to Sin.*

It has been ever observ'd, that Examples have a much greater Influence than Precepts, and that most are readier to do what they see, than what they hear. More particularly, there is a great Inclination in us to follow the Examples of Sin; especially if many, if the Examples of those, for whom we have an high Esteem, and of whom we do stand in great Awe.

*It is an Injury to Mens Souls, in some Cases hardly ever, in others impossible to be Repair'd.*

II.

*We must refuse to Conform our selves to wicked Men, when they shall Tempt us, viz.*

I.

*By their evil Examples.*

*Examples have the greatest Influence upon us; especially*

I. *And, First, We are especially inclin'd to follow the Examples of Sin ;*  
*If Exam- For Sin is what our Corrupt Nature is of it self dispos'd to ; and if*  
*ples of Sin. moreover Examples do come in to help us forward, these will highten*  
 our Desires, and silence our Consciences, and give us some plausible  
 Pretence to Sin. It looks like some Act of Modesty, and Self-denial,  
 to deny our own private Judgment, and to go along with the Croud ;  
 when our Flesh is craving, and our Lusts are up, it is a strange En-  
 couragement to us to Sin in Company, and fulfil 'em. This heartens  
 us against our Fears, and abates the Dread of Punishment, which  
 would follow the Satisfaction of our Lusts. Now if we are Punisht  
 for 'em, it will not be we alone, and it is a Comfort to have Fellows  
 in Miseries, and a Man dares both do, and suffer many things in  
 Company, which he would have been dis-hearten'd to have ven-  
 tur'd on singly.

II. *But, Secondly, We are still more hearten'd to Sin, if the Examples*  
*thereof are Common, and Many. For why ? Besides that there is a*  
*If common, great deal of Proneness and Propension in all our Natures to Vice*  
*and many. and Wickedness, the only Restraint upon our Inclinations, that*  
 we break not out suddenly into all Exorbitancy of Ungodliness, is  
 as inwardly from the Innate Turpitude and Baseness of Sin : So  
 outwardly from the burning and shining Lights, and glorious Ex-  
 amples of Vertue, that are abroad in the World. Now our in-  
 ward sense of the Filthiness of Sin soon ceases, when we see it  
 Practic'd by the most, and those as shrew'd, and as wise Persons as  
 our selves ; and from without, there can be no Upbraiding and ill  
 Report, in giving swing to our naughty Desires, if Vice has once  
 got its Multitudes of Followers, and the Generality of Men of  
 its side.

III. *Thirdly, But farther yet, Examples of Sin are very Contagious, if*  
*If of such, they are the Examples of such, for whom we have a great Esteem. Persons*  
*for whom we of all Sects and Parties in Religion fix upon some in their own way,*  
*have a great as very excellent Persons, and exact Patterns, fit to be imitated*  
*Esteem. in all they do, (as if Men were not Men still, and the Best were*  
 not subject to Mistake and Failing) whatever Duty of Christianity  
 these Men, whom they particularly Admire, seem to have but a  
 small regard to, they do not think it at all necessary, because such a  
 Good Man, would not, if it were, be wanting in it, they think.  
 And so as to any sinful Practice on the other side : Why should I  
 scruple to do so and so, thou wilt say, when such a One, and I am  
 sure he understands what he does, sticks not to do the like. He is  
 a wise Man, a good Man, nay, and a Scholar, and yet does so and  
 so, nor does he fear going to Heaven for all that.

IV. *Fourthly, But above all, the Examples of Sin are the most prevalent,*  
*If of those when they are backt with the Authority of those, whom we stand in awe of.*  
*of whom we These are the Men who will expect, not only to be Obey'd, but*  
*stand in awe. Honour'd. And if we Ape and Imitate 'em in all their ways, we*  
 may hope thereby to obtain their Favour. If we shew a dislike  
 of their Courses, we may have reason to fear their Displeasure.  
 And what is it that two such active Springs in our Nature, as our  
 Hopes and Fears are, will not force us to, or drive us from ? So  
 powerful you see are the Examples of Sin, when they are backt  
 with all these Advantages.

And

And now the Examples of Sin have all these Advantages in 'em, to influence you to Conform your selves unto 'em. Ever since the unhappy Fall of Man, there is in every Child of *Adam* a great deal of Proneness to Sin, rather than to Vertue. Alas! We carry a Principle about us, which is not only buisy and ready to close with the Temptations of others Examples, but is forward to betray us to Sin, tho' we had few Examples for it. Nay, evil Inclinations, and corrupt Desires are so powerful within us, that even the best Instructions, and the most pious Examples, and all other good Means and Helps, are daily found too weak and unable to Overcome 'em. And yet as if all this were little enough, there are far more Examples abroad in the World of Wickedness, than of Goodness; insomuch that by the *World* in Scripture, simply taken, is often meant no other, than *wicked Men*, they make up so great a Part thereof. And not only too many Great Men, whom you have an Awe of, do give most abominable Examples of Profaneness, Lewdness, Drunkenness, &c. to their Inferiors; but to come nearer Home to you, too few of your Parents and Masters, I am afraid, are Examples to you of Religion, and of the Fear of God. Nay, and perhaps some that you have an Esteem for, and you may take for Good Men, may be Examples of Schism and Separation, and of breaking the Unity of the Church, and despisers of the Sacrament, or in one Kind, or other, not so Good as they should be, not entirely and uniformly Good.

And now what must you do in this Case? Why by all means you must Renounce and Refuse Conformity to such bad Examples. You must by no means follow the Examples of Sin, be they who, or what they will. Let them be never so many, you must not follow a Multitude to do Evil, *Exod. 23. 2*. It will not afford the least Ease to the Torments of the Damned, that they are the many, and that the Saved are the few. Nor must the Examples of the *Greatest*, no, nor of those you count *Good Men*, be a Rule to you, when they vary from the Laws of God. There is no Man so *Great, Wise, or Good*, that he can dispense with God's Laws, and absolve you from your Allegiance to the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth. This Great Man, or that Parent, or Master, to flatter and please whom, you do follow their Examples in sinning against God, and your own Soul, cannot afford you Protection from God's Wrath, nor Rescue you from under the Stroak of Divine Vengeance: No, but he shall be as liable to it himself, as the poorest Slave.

No, First, a Christian, a Souldier of Jesus Christ, is call'd out to Combat against the wicked Examples of the World, as much as against any one sort of Enemy in his Christian Warfare; and be they never so many, never so mighty, he must not be over-born by 'em, so as to Conform himself unto 'em, and either Renounce his Faith, or commit any Sin by the influence of such numerous and mighty Examples. We read the 2d of *Kings*, that in the Days of wicked *Ahab*, the whole People of *Israel* were so Apostatiz'd from the true Religion, that *Elisba* thought there was but himself left alone, who had not through the influence of so many Idolatrous Examples, and the Power of that wicked Prince (together with the Corruption of their own Hearts, so prone to Idolatry) he thought there was

*We must by all Means renounce and refuse Conformity to such bad Examples: For*

*I. A Christian is call'd out to Combat against the wicked Examples of the World, as much as against any one sort of Enemy in his Christian Warfare.*

D d d

Not



*Not one man left in Israel, who had not bowed his knee to Baal.* But he was never the more stagger'd for all that, but preserv'd himself notwithstanding, a true Worshiper of the True God. And for the Encouragement of you, who are Children and Servants, if it has been your misfortune to be Born of wicked Parents, and Bred up in ungodly Families, consider that *There was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel,* for which God had a Regard to him, even in *Abijah* the Son of wicked *Jeroboam*, who made *Israel* to Sin, *1 King.* 14. 13. And *Obadiah* preserv'd himself a good Man, even in the House of wicked *Ahab*, Chap. 18. 13. And so must you likewise, as you will approve your selves faithful Souldiers of Jesus Christ, be wrought upon by no Examples to comply with Sin.

*Nay, secondly, to Confront their bad Examples with an excellent One of his own.*

Nay, Secondly, So far must a Christian be from *Conforming himself* to the Examples of wicked Men, which would Influence him to Sin, that he is call'd forth to do more, Namely, to confront their bad Ones, with an extraordinary good One of his own; and in the midst of an *Evil and Adulterous Generation*, he must shew himself an excellent Example of Religion and Vertue. Hence it is, that in the Fifth of *St. Matthew*, of us Christians it is said, that we must be the *Salt of the Earth*, ver. 13. that we must be the *Light of the World*, and a *City set on a Hill, that cannot be hid*, and a *Candle, not put under a Busbel, but on a Candlestick*, ver. 14, 15. And lastly, we are there commanded, ver. 16. *To let our Light so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father, which is in Heaven.* It is therefore, that we are thus Represented, because, that by the Excellency of our Examples, we must be as *Salt* to a corrupted World, to Season and Recover it from its Corruption; that by the Eminency of all Christian Vertues and Graces, shining in our Conversations, we must Enlighten the dark World; and lead 'em, by the Brightness of our good Examples, into Holiness and Purity of Living. So much it lies upon you, not to Conform your selves to evil Examples, that would lead you into Sin, that by the Goodness of your own, you must draw others off from it.

## II.

*When they shall Tempt and Entice us by their evil Company.*

*The Company of the Wicked extremely Infections.*

Secondly, *You must Refuse to Conform your selves, as to the Examples, so to the Company of wicked Men, when falling amongst 'em they would entice you to join with 'em in Sin.* As there are a great many more of bad Examples abroad in the World, than good Ones: So the Infection thereof is a great deal more taking, when a many of those bad Men are met together in Company, than when they remain asunder from one another. And so much Charm there is to Bewitch, or Power in ill Company to Enforce others to sinful Compliances, that even sober and good Men, when it is their Misfortune to fall amongst such, shall hardly preserve their Integrity, and come off from amongst 'em with as much Innocence, as they went in; but either thro' the Noisiness of their Companions, forgetting that Guard they have at other times over their Thoughts, Words, and Deeds; or for Fear of being Reproacht as *morose, dull, or ill-natur'd*, shall too far many times comply with the Rest of the Company, both in Speaking, and Acting, what is not very consistent with the Duty and Reservedness of a Christian. But as for the young, ignorant, and inconsiderate Part of Mankind, Good God! What Mischiefs are such drawn into, through the Enticements of Evil

Evil Company. Your lewd Companions indeed, as they are usually very Buify in doing Mischief, and Corrupting others; and will wonderfully Triumph and Rejoyce, when they have Perverted a Sober Person, and made him as Bad as Themselves: So they are above all Industrious, to Corrupt and Ensnare Youth, that they may Propagate a Generation, as Wicked as they have been. And how will they Hug themselves, when they have Debaucht an innocent Young Person, and made him at any time Drunk; or betray'd him into Lewdness, or any other Wickedness; especially if of promising Hopes, and of ingenious Parts; and how many Wiles shall be us'd to Ensnare him again? *Their Mouth is full of Deceit and Fraud, under their Tongue is Ungodliness and Vanity, they ly lurking in the Thievish Corners of the Streets, to wait for the Innocent, to draw him into their Net,* Psal. 10. 7, 8, 9.

If you look into the particular Miscarriages of Men in the World, what a Lamentable thing it is to consider, How many hopeful Youth have wofully Miscarry'd through wicked Company? How many have we known go Abroad into the World, the Hopes of their Families, the Expectations of their Country, and the most Promising Persons of the Nation, but Falling into ill Company, have prov'd the most outrageous Fiends on this side Hell? And what Vices, what Villanies are there, that Evil Company has not drawn 'em into?

*Most of the Miscarriages of Men owing thereunto*

What shall I say? It is Evil Company, that makes the Youth an Atheist. Alas! The unwary Stripling no sooner goes into the World, but these Factors for the Devil lay hold on him; and with all the wily Insinuations, and cunning Artifices, with Arguments best suited to the Temper of the Young Man, they Perswade him to join with 'em in their lewd Courses. They do usually Enter him at first in your Taverns, and those Places of publick Entertainment, that are something more Remote from, and ly, as it were, only on the Highway to Sin. They next carry him from thence into the very Suburbs of Hell, those Houses, I mean, where such Scenes of Lewdness are seen and acted, as would Profane the Place we are in, to mention, as are not fit to be spoke to Chast Ears, nor indeed can Enter your Thoughts, without leaving behind some base Defilement. And now if he has that Talent, which they call Wit, such a share at least, as will enable him to talk Profanely, to break Jest upon Scripture, and, Oh Brutish Stupidity! Oh desperate Madnes! To Blaspheme, and fly into the Face of God Almighty; they feed his Vanity with loud Applauses, and cry up to the Skies his Wit and Parts. And by this he thinks himself sufficiently furnisht, to be an Apostle of Satan's also himself; and henceforwards you shall see him, to be Intent wholly upon this very thing, to draw all others into the same Damnation also along with him.

*This makes Men Atheists*

Alas! It is nothing but Evil Company, that Emboldens the Young Man for lewd Pranks. At first he is Asham'd to have his Name up amongst lewd Companions, and his Natural Modesty will not let him look an Harlot in the Face; but they soon Laugh him out of that Clownish Shamefacedness, so that he can at length Sin with Impudence enough, can Glory in his Shame, and Brag of more mad Exploits, than he was ever guilty of Committing; and

*Libertines.*



is with the greatest Ease drawn aside to his Destruction, by every lewd Harlot, that lies in wait for him; as Solomon most excellently observes, *Prov. 7.*

*Thieves, and Robbers.*

It is evil Company, that draws so many into the sad Trade of Thievery and Robbery. They entice and invigle others to join with 'em in those desperate Undertakings, in which so many miscarry, that not One in a Hundred, that being once Engag'd, can rid himself of 'em, or comes not at last to some End of Shame, or Sorrow. And there are few of those, who are Condemn'd for Theft, or Murder, when they come to Dye, but wofully complain in their Confessions, that it was evil Company, that brought them to it. Come say they, with those in the *Prov. 1. 11, 12, 13.* *Let us lay wait for Blood, let us swallow them up as the Grave, and whole as those, that go down into the Pit, we shall find all precious Substance, fill our houses with Spoil, cast in thy Lot amongst us, let us all have one Purse.*

*Drunkards.*

It is evil Company, that makes Men Drunkards and Sots. There is not One at first however, that loves Drinking for Drinking sake: 'Tis the Witchery of good Fellowship, as they falsely call it, that first Enters 'em, and afterwards holds 'em in that Course of Living, to the Ruine of their Families, their Estates, their Health, their Bodies, their Souls; and all that is Precious in this, or the other World.

*Withdraws from the worship of God.*

It is Evil Company, that often keeps some from Church, and the Worship of God, that perswades some to idle at Home, others to wander in the Streets and Fields, whilst they should be a serving of God in his House. What shall I say? It is Evil Company, that discourages from all Good, and hardens Men in all manner of Sin and Wickedness.

The fairest Vessels have split upon this Rock, the most promising Hopes and Expectations of Families, of their Countries, have been Ship-wrackt, have been lost in this Sea.

*Evil Company therefore if sinners entice thee, consent thou not, say my Son walk not in the way of all things with them, refrain thy foot from their path. No, go not into their to be abhor'd*

But let me add the Wise-man's Advice, *Prov. 1. 10, 11. &c.* *My Son* Company, *Evil Communications corrupt good Manners,* 1 Cor. 15. 33. 'Tis dangerous even to Talk with 'em, but Associate thy self to 'em upon no account. There is Contagion and Infection wherever they are. Thou may'st enter a House infected with the Plague, tread upon the Adder's Nest, put thine Hand into a Lion's Den; but on no Hand enter the Society of those Sons of Belial, who seem to defy Heaven with Oaths and Blasphemies, strive to load themselves with so much of that Hellish Guilt, as if they fear'd they should not sink deep enough into the bottomless Pit. Beware of 'em; their Houses are the way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death.

I.

*Young women must shun the corrupt Conversation of young Men.*

And, First, Particularly you that are Young Women, let me warn you to shun the Company of those Young Men, be they who they will, who shall offer to talk loosely, and lewdly, and wantonly before you. I am afraid that *Filthy Communication, and foolish* of *Jesting, which are not convenient,* are too much the subject of Conversation, when the Youth of both Sexes meet together, especially amongst such of lower Rank, and who have not been Blest with



with the beſt Education and Breeding. But as to offer at Filthineſs and fooliſh Talking before you, is the greateſt Affront any can give you, as ſignifying no good Opinion they have of you ; ſo Young Men will not have the Confidence to Entertain you ſo Indecently and Rudely, if at the very firſt Offers of that Nature, you ſhall appear to conceive that Anger and Indignation, as infinitely becomes the modeſty of your Sex to put on. And I am ſure you would, both heartily deteſt ſuch Converſation, and not fail to ſhew your Detestation thereof, if you would ſeriously conſider what the Apoſtles ſays of it, Eph. 5. 3, 4, 5. *Fornication and Uncleannels, let it not be once named amongſt you, as becometh Saints : Neither Filthineſs, nor fooliſh Talking, nor Jeſting, which are not convenient ; For this know, that no Whoremongers, nor unclean Perſon, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Chriſt. Let no man deceive you, for becauſe of theſe words cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience.* Pray obſerve this whole Paſſage of St. Paul. “Wanton and laſcivious Diſcourſe is as Infectious as the very Plague, and kindles ſuch a Fire of Luſt, as “without Repentance will certainly bring you to the Fire of Hell : Therefore fail not to expreſs your utmoſt Abhorrence thereof ; and if you cannot ſtop it, fly from thoſe that utter it, as from Perſons infected with a Plague-Sore, having ſuch an Air of Anger, and Indignation, and Abhorrence, as you go off, as no Man dare thereafter diſturb you with the like.

And indeed, Secondly, it concerns all ſort of Perſons of either Sex, both Young and Old, as they would prevent Infection of evil Company, and conſidering how dangerous it is to be taken therewith : And how the Tincture of their Manners and Customs, with whom we do frequently Converſe, is obſerv'd to ſlide inſenſibly into our Imitation, ſo as to be hardly ever after wore off : All theſe things conſider'd, It concerns you, I ſay, to take all poſſible Care to avoid the Company of bad Men. I ſay, to avoid it, if it be poſſible ; for it is not always, nay it is very rarely in this State of the World, that it can be done : *For if ye muſt not Company with the Fornicators of this world, or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters ; then muſt ye needs go out of the world,* ſaid St. Paul, 1 Cor. 5. 10.

The Truth of it is, your Employment and neceſſary Occaſions, as to moſt of you, is, or will be ſuch, that you will unavoidably be drawn forth into the World ; and the World we know is full of Atheiſtical and profane Perſons, and common Swearers, of Drunkards, and riotous Livers, of debauch'd and lewd Companions ; and laſtly, of the Contemners of God, and Religion ; and I am afraid it is the general Converſation now a-days, of thoſe Companions, to break Jeſts, and laugh at one another upon theſe their Diſhonours done to God, and Religion, whereby they *Do not only do ill things themſelves, but have pleaſure in them that do them,* which St. Paul does add, Rom. 1. 32. as the higheſt Aggravation of all Impiety. To ſpeak freely, and not to flatter the preſent State of the World : I am afraid you ſhall ſeldom go into *Promiſcuous Company*, but ſome ſuch you ſhall meet withal. And now the great Enquiry will be, What ſhall be done in this Caſe ?

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Why,

II.  
*All Perſons of either Sex, both Young, and Old, as they will prevent the Infection of evil Company, muſt take all poſſible Care to avoid it.*

But, Thirdly, when Employment and necessary Occasions draw Men forth into the World, they must refuse to Conform themselves to the Manners of ill Company.

Why, Thirdly, Truly when it thus happens to you, that your Employment, and necessary Occasions draw you forth into the World that which you have then to do, is to refuse to Conform your selves to the Manners of such Company. \* But, First, you must with all wariness and circumspection watch, lest framing your selves to the Humours of profane Persons, you countenance and encourage 'em in what is sinful and wicked, and so partake with 'em in their Sins, and make their Guilt your own. Nay, but on the contrary, you must at least-wise by a pious and discreet Behaviour, and by shewing a dislike and uneasiness at their Hellish Talk, discountenance the Folly of those that do thus Offend.

II. By diverting 'em by useful Discourse from both.

Secondly, You must not fail, to do what you can, to divert the Company you happen amongst, from Riot and Excess, and from vicious and filthy Talk, by drawing 'em, with what Dexterity possible, into more manly Discourse, and into a more Christian, sober, rational Conversation.

III. If all Methods fail, by openly Reproving them.

But, Thirdly, if after all, if all these wise and modest Methods will not do, but on they will go, and good Sense must give way to such unfavoury Entertainment: Why then there is no help, but you must boldly and bravely Rebuke their impudent Folly, and openly Reprove it.

To do this Service to God we are particularly Lifted in our Baptism.

For why? You must consider, that you have Lifted your selves in your Baptism, the Souldiers of Jesus Christ, and no faithful Souldier will patiently hear his General abus'd, his Honour trampled upon, his Commands slighted and scorn'd, but will stoutly stand up in Vindication of him, and his Orders. As you will not therefore be accounted in the Day of Judgment, such as have Deserted the Great Captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ, you must not stand by, and tamely suffer profane Wretches to dishonour God's Holy Name and Word, by their unfavoury Oaths and Speeches, and you must not cowardly permit 'em to Brag of their Contemptuous breaking of his sacred Laws, without Rebuking their Wickedness, and stoutly standing up in Defence of him, and them.

We shall be much discouraged from this by Men.

You must expect, I will own it, to meet with but rude Entertainment, for such your Fidelity to your great Master. You shall be sure to be accounted Fools, Mad and Rude for your Pains. And it is odds, but you shall be reproacht as Hypocrites, that would fain seem Better than others, but can privately be as Bad as they.

But have in- smite Encouragements to such Fidelity from God.

But consider, the more you suffer for the Honour of your Lord, the more like good Souldiers you behave your selves, and the better he will reward you. Consider what a glorious Thing it is to be Evil spoken of for Well-doing: *Blessed are ye when Men shall Revile you, and say all manner of Evil against you, falsely for my sake; Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven, Matth. 5. 11, 12.* Consider your Saviour and Leader, who suffer'd worse Reproaches, and *The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant his Lord, if they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his Household, Matth. 10. 24, 25.* Consider that a Christian must not fear the Face of any Man, but

\* First, By discountenancing their Profaneness and Riot.

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must suffer Martyrdom, it self, in the Cause of Christ, if call'd out to it: *Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul, but fear him who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell, ver. 28.* Nay, consider lastly, that this Standing up resolutely for the Honour of God and Religion, is the next Degree to Martyrdom, and will be rewarded like it. It is call'd a *Confessing of God before Men*, and on the other side, a fearing and forbearing to appear in His behalf, a *Denying of him*; and consider what our Saviour declares concerning such, who do so Confess, or Deny him: *Whosoever shall Confess me before Men, him will I Confess before my Father which is in Heaven; but whosoever shall Deny me before Men, him will I also Deny before my Father which is in Heaven, Matth. 10. 32, 33.* So much it concerns you to refuse Conformity to the Evil Company of the World: And so much for this time.

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## T H E Eighteenth Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Pumps and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.**

**T**HAT which I am now upon is, to Forewarn you against the Temptations of the wicked World, by shewing you the dangerous Ones you shall meet withal, from the *Wicked Men of the World, and in what Sence, and how far you must Renounce both them, and their wicked ways of Tempting others to Sin.* This I have already done, as to their *Evil Examples, and Evil Company,* and have deliver'd these Instructions to you, that by God's Help may, I hope, be sufficient to prevent your being infected by the Poison of either. But the wicked Men of the World, have other ways of Tempting Men to Sin, and what they are, and how bravely you must Resist them, I am next to declare unto you.

III. Thirdly, Then, amongst the greatest Temptations proceeding from Evil Men, we may deservedly reckon their *Flatteries.* Now the Flatterer is One, who observing the general Self-love and Pride of Mankind, who cannot endure Reproof, or any thing that shews a Dislike of what they say, or do, does compose himself to Admire and Extol, or at least-wise to Approve, as Well-done, very bad Actions, or at best such, as if Good in themselves, are but indifferently Perform'd.

*The Ground thereof our own immoderate Self-love* The Ground of his Flattery, I say, is *That immoderate Self-love* he observes Natural to most Men, whereby they do extravagantly esteem and admire their own Performances, and can see no Defects therein: And therefore, whoever shall endeavour to discover their Faults, tho' in never so Prudent a manner, to any of these Self-admirers, he is presently lookt upon as One, that either envies his Abilities and good Qualities, or as *St. Paul* was to the foolish *Galatians*: *He is therefore become his Enemy, because he tells him the Truth,* Gal. 4. 16.

And now the Flatterer observing this predominant Humour in him, puts on the Vizard of a Friend, *And composes himself to Admire and Extol, or at least-wise to Approve, as Well-done, his very bad Actions, or at best such, as if Good in themselves, are very indifferently Perform'd.* The Flatterer's care is to Please, not to Profit him, to whom he pretends to be a Friend, to make a Prey of the besotted Self-admirer, and therefore soothes him up in his Vices; he calls his  
Profane-

Profaneness, Wit; she that is Superstitious, Devout; the Prodigal and Profuse, he stiles Bountiful and Liberal; and the Covetous Worldling, from whom he expects an Estate, or Legacy, he Extolls to his Face, for his Prudence in managing his Affairs: The Oaths and Curses, the Riot and Debaucheries of the wicked Crew he happens amongst, he laughs at, as brave Exploits, and applauds them as the Standards of Wit and Bravery. And as to such things, which are tolerably well Perform'd, but might be Better'd, for fear of mortifying the *Vanity of the Creature*, whereby he might possibly displease him, he discovers nothing of that, but *all is Well*, and *admirably Perform'd*.

And now this Flattery to the Vices and Imperfections of Men is of mischievous Consequence to 'em. So Prov. 26. 28. *A flattering Mouth worketh Ruine*; and 29. 5. *A man that flattereth spreadeth a Net*. For why? "The Flatterer, as *Plutarch* observes, endeavours "to make every Man his own Cheat, by keeping him ignorant of "of the good and ill Qualities, which are in him, whereupon the "Good never comes to Perfection, and the Ill grow Incorrigible.

By this means, I say, *The Good never come at Perfection*. There is many a Person of a Generous Temper, who delights to do Good to Mankind, whose Head is working for the Publick, and loves to relieve the Needy; but all this 'tis visible he does too much out of Ostentation, and to get the Praise of Men, and so loses his Reward from God: But now if he had but a faithful Monitor, that would fairly represent to him the Vanity and Affectation, that appears in the Good he does, and which others can see, tho' he himself is not sensible of. And that it is but to direct it to a right End, and then he will obtain a Reward in Heaven, and moreover merit the Praises of Men too: A little of this Sincerity and Freedom would make that Man an excellent Person, whom now his Vanity and Braging of the Good he does, renders Troublesom and Hateful even to those, whom he most Obliges. There is also many a One, who in his Projects concerning his own Advantage, and that of the Publick, out of an over-fond Conceit of his own Methods, disdaining to ask Counsel; or if he did, they flattering every thing, and not sincerely giving their Advice; the Design it self therefore, and the measures of obtaining it, tho' Good in the main, has for that very reason alone mis-carry'd: So much does the Self-flattery of our own Hearts, join'd with the Flatteries of other Persons, hinder our Good from arriving to Perfection.

*And the Ill that is in Men does thereby grow Incorrigible*. Thus there is not a greater Cause at this Day of that Profaneness and Impudence in Sin and Debauchery, than the Assentations, Smiles, and other Tokens of Approbation given by base Flattery, to horrid Wickednesses; whereas would every Christian, as he is infinitely bound to do, express his Dislike, his Abhorrence, his Scorn of the Debauchees, and their Debaucheries, when they are openly Committed, or impudently Brag'd of, the impious Sinners of this Age would then endeavour to be Private however, not *Affect*, as they do, to be Publick in their Villanies. This base Flattery, of which there are but few, who are not Guilty, in not putting a Frown at least-wise, instead of a Smile, upon impious Doings, has tended

extreamly to harden the young Reprobates of our Age to their own, and the Nation's Ruine ; for indeed, as the excellent *Plutarch* Expresses it, "When Vice is Extoll'd, so that a Man is induc'd to Sin, not only without Regret, but with Joy and Triumph, and is hardned beyond the modesty of a Blush for his Enormities: This sort of Flattery has been fatal to whole Kingdoms. And tho' indeed the Great Ones are most subject to it, because they of all Men, will not endure Reproof; yet there are not any so mean, we see, whose Vices are not Applauded amongst their Companions, rather than Reprehended, and who are not therefore hardned thereby into all manner of Wickedness. In a word, It is this sort of Flattery, which amongst all Ranks and Degrees of Men, *Has strengthened the hands of the Wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way*, Ezek. 13. 22. So mischievous a Temptation, you see, is Flattery; it hinders all sorts of Persons from improving their Vertues, and encourages 'em to the highest Pitch of Wickedness. And now what must be done in this Case, that you may effectually Renounce it, and avoid the ill Effects of it? And in order thereunto,

I. First, Let me Advise you, with the excellent Philosopher now mention'd, that *We Caspire every vain Opinion of our selves, whose Renounce flat-tery we must Caspire every vain Opinion of our own selves.* "Inbred Flattery only disposes and prepares us to a more favourable Reception of that from without: For he who loves to be Flatter'd, is doubtless sufficiently fond of himself; and thro' abundance of Complaisance to his own Person, not only wishes, but thinks himself Master of all those Perfections, which may Recommend him to others. But did we reflect upon our own Nature and Education, and consider what gross Imperfections and Failures, mixt with our Words, Actions and Affections, we should not lie so open to the Attempts of every Flatterer, who designs upon us; and we should be well prepar'd to Renounce and Reject all his deceitful Flatteries, which must be done: For

II. Secondly, Having thus dispossess your Breasts of an immoderate Self-love, you must *We must so far Renounce the Flatteries of Men, as to take it kindly to be Reproved.* So far renounce and reject the Flatteries of Men, as to take it kindly, when you are Reprov'd. And indeed you are to Esteem and Love him, as your truest Friend, who deals so Ingeniously with you, as frankly to discover to you your Imperfections and Failings of any Kind, and freely to reprove you for your Faults. *David* desired such a Friend, who would thus Reprove him, Psal. 141. 5. *Let the Righteous smite me, and it shall be a Kindness, and let him Reprove me, and it shall be an excellent Oyl, which shall not break my Head;* intimating of the Flatteries of wicked Men, which in the other Translation are call'd *precious Balms*, would mortally wound him. And *Solomon*, who best knew what Wisdom was, and the methods of Attaining it, does most frequently speak of Reproof, as a most excellent One, *The Ear that heareth the Reproof of Life, abideth among the Wise; He that refuseth Instruction, despiseth his own Soul; but he that feareth Reproof, getteth Understanding*, Prov. 15. 31, 32. But on the contrary, to hate Reproof, is in his account the High-way to Error, Ruine and Destruction. Thus Prov. 10. 17. *He that refuseth Reproof erreth.* and 15. 10. *He that hateth Reproof shall dye.* and 29. 1. *A man of Reproof, that hardneth his Neck shall be destroyed.* This indeed,



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indeed, as any other Discipline is distastful to Flesh and Blood, but it is in it self the most profitable sort of Correction, for *A Reproof entereth more into a Wise man than Stripes*, Prov. 17. 10.

And as you must bring your self to that humble and low Opinion of your own Perfections, and to that sense of your Faults, as to take kindly the Reproof of a Friend, and to amend upon it; so especially you are to receive, with all Reverence, and Respect, and Kindness the Reproofs of God's Ministers, tending either to better, or reform you. Of all Men living it must not be expected from us, to favour you in any thing amiss, to smile upon your Extravagancies, to speak only Comforts and Consolations to you, when we come to deal with your Consciences, which ought to be searcht to the Bottom by us, and the Corruption let out. This was that Flattery, which *Jeremiah* reprehends, and severely threatens in the Prophets and Priests of his Time, 6. 13, 14, 15. But our Business is by Preaching, Catechizing, and all the Methods of Instruction, to give you a through Understanding of all the Terms and Conditions of that Covenant, wherein you stand Engag'd to God; to be Watchmen over your Souls, in order to discover your Errors and Failures therein; to direct you for your better Improvement in those Graces, whereunto you have already attain'd; and you must expect it from us, to frown upon your Follies, and boldly to Reprove you, when we perceive you to Transgress our Great Master's Laws. And you must receive all this at our Hands, not only as a necessary Discharge of our Duty, but what you must apply to your own Improvement and Reformation. And this if you should not do, your Ruine will be imputed to it. Hence *Solomon* warns the Young-man to beware of sinful Extravagancies, *Lest he be brought to Mourn at the last, when his Flesh and his Bones are consumed*, and to own as the cause of all this, *That he hated Instruction, and that his Heart despised Reproof, that he obey'd not the Voice of his Teachers, nor inclined his Ear to them, that Instructed him*, Prov. 5. 11, 12, 13. So far therefore is the Flattery of wicked Men to be Renounced, that Reproof on the contrary is to be Kindly receiv'd. But

*Especially the Reproofs of Gods Ministers are to be kindly received and regarded.*

Fourthly, Wicked Men will proceed farther to Tempt others to Sin, even *By their false and fallacious Argueings against the Necessity of a Wicked Men Holy Life*. One would think there should be none professing Christianity, that should openly Plead for Sin; but yet such Factors and Agents Satan has amongst us, as will openly Avow his Cause, and will endeavour to Perswade you, that you are not Obliged to that Strictness of Living, which we Preachers are continually sounding in Men's Ears.

IV.

*Tempt others to Sin by their false and fallacious Argueings against the Necessity of a Holy Life.*

And to this Purpose you shall hear them Argue so hotly, that God no doubt is a Merciful Being, and will not surely for the Sins of a short Life, Condemn the Guilty to an Eternity of Woe and Misery. And as to the Duties of Religion, you shall hear 'em argue, that they are hard Sayings, and who can bear 'em. And as to themselves, you shall hear these Men often Pleading, that they are made of Flesh and Blood, and therefore sure God will not require Men, upon the Hazard of Salvation, to mortify the Flesh; and that they are set in a World full of Temptations, and abounding in Delights and Pleasures; and that therefore God, who has Plac'd 'em in it, will not

command 'em upon Pain of Damnation, to Overcome these strong Temptations, and to deny these Pleasures of the World.

These are the common, and pernicious, and licentious Argueings of Men, to perswade both themselves and others into such easy Notions of God and Religion, that they may Sin with more Security, and less Fear. And this has been a powerful Art in all times; and such Arguments as these Men are most ready to Believe, because they love the Thing they Plead for, because they favour their Lusts, and grant 'em so much Liberty in what they long for, the satisfying the Flesh, and enjoying the World.

*All which wicked Reasonings we must fortify our selves against; as when they Plead*

But do you beware, and fortify your selves well against those false Argueings of Sinful men, in Behalf of their Lusts, and against the Strictness of Religion, whereby they would Perswade you, as well as themselves, into a sinful Security, and with-draw you from, or slacken you in your Duty. They are *false and fallacious Arguments*, that would perswade us to Comply in the least with Sin, for there is nothing more plain in Scripture, than that Sin must with all possible Care be avoided. It tells us positively, *That we must deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, Tim. 2. 12. *And that all that name the Name of Christ, must depart from Iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. And that all true Christians must be *Cleansed from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and perfect Holiness in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And in order to Perfection, that they must *Cut off right Hands, and put out right Eyes, when they offend 'em*; that is, any Lusts that are so dear and useful to you, as these Members are, Matth. 29. 30. What shall I say? It tells us, that the *Friendship of the world is Enmity against God, and that whosoever will be a Friend of the world, is an Enemy of God*, Jam. 4. 4. And then as for the Punishment of Sin, there is not One but has the Penalty of Eternal Death and Misery, if Unrepented of, affixt to it. Particularly, Rev. 21. 8. it is said, that *the Fearful, or those who Apostatize from the Faith out of fear, And unbelieving, and the abominable, and Murderers, and Whore-mongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimstone; which is the second death*. This the Word of God does assure us, and then for Men to raise to themselves Hopes of Impunity, so contrary to the expresse Declarations of Scripture, when if they shall be mistaken, and find after all, God's Threatnings to prove real, (as there is infinite Reason to believe they shall) this is certainly the most desperate Presumption in the World.

T I.

*hat it is inconsistent with God's Mercy for the Sins of a short life to Condemn the Guilty to an Eternity of Woe and Misery.*

But if you consider these Arguments afunder, there is no strength in 'em wherefore any should venture to rely upon 'em. *For in the first place, it is in no wise Inconsistent with God's Mercy, for the Sins of a short Life, to Condemn the Guilty to an Eternity of Woe and Misery.* His Mercy is sufficiently satisfied in laying no Tyrannical Impositions upon us, as Satan and all false Gods have done upon their superstitious Votaries. It is yet a farther Demonstration of his Mercy, that our vertuous Performances, tho' they are their own Reward here, yet they shall be also abundantly Recompenced hereafter. He does moreover let us see his Mercy in his long Forbearance of us, notwithstanding, that by our numberless Provocations, we do *Grieve his Holy Spirit*. But he has given us the greatest Discoveries of his Mercy,

Mercy, beyond what could ever enter into the Hearts of Men to expect, when he gave his own Son to be an *Atonement and Expiation* for our Sins, that his Justice might not proceed against us; and when he sent him to us with a Covenant of Grace, as an Act of Pardon, proposing to us, not only a perfect Reconciliation with our offended God, but infinite Rewards in Heaven, if we would return to our due Obedience, and Pay him no other but a reasonable Service. I think this is sufficient for Mercy to do; and if such immeasurable Mercies will not win upon us, it is time that as severe a Justice should then take place; for we are to consider God as the supreme Governour of Men, and Justice is as necessary an Attribute in Government, as Mercy.

Nor is his Severity, in Punishing the Sins of a short Life, with an Eternity of Woe and Misery, but what is agreeable to his Justice and Wisdom, as supreme Governour of the World. It is necessary in all Governments, that the Laws thereof should be enforced with such Penalties, as shall be sufficient to deter People from the Transgression of those Laws. And therefore the Penalties being future, it is necessary they should be vastly Great, to Over-balance the Profits, or Pleasures of Sin, which are present. It may seem hard indeed at first sight, in Humane Governments, that a Person for Clipping a Piece of Silver, which bears the *Image and Superscription of Caesar*, or for Stealing it from another, should forfeit not only his Goods and Chattels, but also his Life itself; but yet since upon the Temptations of present Profit, bad Men will adventure to commit such Facts, and the Authority of Laws cannot otherwise be kept up, nor Men's Rights and Properties preserved: It is not thought by the Honest Part of Mankind, Inconsistent with the Wisdom and Justice of Governours, to inflict even such Punishments, as extend to the loss of Life. It is these alone are sufficient to Out-weigh the present Consideration of Profit to the Offender, and effectually to move him to live in Obedience to Government; and therefore these, as great as they be, are esteemed but Just and Equal. So here in the Government of God over us: The Pleasures and Profits of Sin, to compass which, Men will Transgress the Laws of Heaven, are but short, true it is; but yet being present, and the Punishments Threatened to them being apprehended, by most Sinners, to be at a great distance, they are therefore generally prevailing, and Men for that Reason do venture to Transgress the Laws of God, (a Thing of worse Consequence than the Violation of Humane Ordinances;) and therefore it is no other, than what can be expected from the Justice and Wisdom of the supreme Governour of the World, to inflict such infinite and eternal Punishments. In short, Divine Vengeance, as well as Humane, must be such as will Over-balance the Reasons and Motives to Sin. And the Pleasures and Profits of Sin being present, and the Divine Punishments not taking place but in another World, according to the Fundamental Rules and Reasons of Government, they must be Infinite and Eternal, and all little enough, or otherwise they will not be sufficient to secure our Obedience to the Laws of Heaven. So that there is no Strength in this Argument of Sinful Men, against the Justice of Eternal Torments, in the behalf of their Lusts, whereby they would persuade you, as well as themselves,



into a most dangerous Security, and with-draw you from, or slacken you in your Duty.

II. *That the Duties of Religion are hard Sayings which no man can bear.* Secondly, *Nor are the Duties of our Religion hard Sayings, which no Man can bear*, as they will likewise plead. All the Duties enjoin'd us in the Gospel, respect either God, our Neighbour, or our Selves. Those to God, as we find 'em laid down *in pure and undefiled Christianity* (undefiled, I say, with the Inventions of Men) are no superstitious, senseless, and uncouth Observances, so much the matter of all other Worship besides the Christian; but are all of 'em indeed, a most *reasonable Service*. Those which respect our Neighbour, are no other than Acts of Justice, Peace, and Charity, the contrary of which would destroy Humane Society, or make us Beasts of Prey one to another. And as to those Duties we owe to our selves, why, they are no other than, that we should truly and *justly Value our selves*, neither *overmuch* by Pride, nor *too little* by letting base Lusts to reign over us, or the inferior Part of our Nature, to Domineer it over our Reason and Understanding, the Superior, and in all Equity the governing Part of us. And what is there hard in all this, that we should Quarrel with our Duty, except we count it hard, that God, who has made us reasonable Creatures, would not suffer us to Transform our selves into unreasonable Brutes.

III. *That they are made of Flesh and Blood, and that therefore sure God will not require Men upon the Forfeiture of Salvation if they do not to mortify the Flesh.* Thirdly, And this is a sufficient Answer also, to that other Pleading of sinful Men, *That they are made of Flesh and Blood, and therefore sure God will not require Men, upon the Forfeiture of Salvation, if they do not, to Mortify the Flesh*. For these Men, who Plead thus, ought to consider, that they consist of Soul and Spirit, as well as of Flesh and Blood; and as the Soul is Superior, and the Governing Part within us; So it is highly Reasonable it should have the Obedience of the Other: And this is all the *Mortification*, which Religion puts the Flesh to. It would keep it in Subjection to the Dictates of right Reason, and that is all. And tho' this Mortification of the Flesh is to be exercis'd, by Imposing some Severities sometimes upon the Body, as by Fasting and Watching, &c. Yet this is no more to be complain'd of, than that Refractory Children, and Servants, and Subjects must be sometimes kept up under Discipline, as there shall be occasion.

*Lastly, that God has set us in a World full of Temptations, and abounding with sensual Delights and Pleasures; and therefore, who has Plac'd us in it, sure will not Command us upon Pain of Damnation, to Overcome those strong Temptations, and to Deny these Pleasures of the World.* Nay, but Lastly, say these Men, *God has set us in a World full of Temptations, and abounding with sensual Delights and Pleasures; and therefore, who has Plac'd us in it, sure will not Command us upon Pain of Damnation, to Overcome those strong Temptations, and to Deny these Pleasures of the World*. And we'll grant it, that he has Plac'd us in a State of Probation and Tryal, where we have sensual Pleasures and Delights, and many other Temptations, besetting us on the one side, as well as the Rewards of Heaven, awaiting us on the other; and where were the Vertue, and what Place would there be for Reward, if there were not those Difficulties to Overcome? But in short, there is not any thing Unreasonable, nor a Hardship unsupportable in any thing, that God has Enjoin'd us; for the same Almighty Goodness, which gives us the Command to do these things, gives us also the Will and Power to Obey, and besides proposes to us Enjoyments infinitely surpassing those Worldly Pleasures, as the Rewards of such Obedience. And so I have given you sufficient Answers

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ſwers to thoſe falſe and fallacious Argueings of ſinful Men, againſt the Neceſſity of a Holy Life, I know 'em to be too common in the Diſcourſes of ſuch Perſons, who love their Luſts, and therefore I thought it requiſite to Fortify you againſt them.

But to proceed, Fifthly, Wicked Men will not be content by the ſecret Influence of their Examples and Company only, nor by their falſe and fallacious Arguments to Tempt you to Sin, but *Will moreover ſometimes add Kindneſſes and Promiſes to oblige you to do ill Things, and on the contrary will much diſcourage you, nay ſometimes Threaten you, to forbear your Duty.*

The Kindneſſes of Friendſhip are of all things the moſt Engaging, and if your Choice of a Friend has not been ſo diſcreetly and happily made, but he happens to be a wicked Man, who upon the Score of former Obligations laid upon you, will require in Return, that ſome ill Thing ſhould be done by you to ſerve his Intereſt, you will be drawn thereby into a very great Snare; for beſides that, there is in very many, whom we call Good-natur'd Men, ſuch an Eaſineſs of Mind, that they can hardly deny any thing to thoſe, who have once Oblig'd 'em; but are ready to Pleaſure and Comply with 'em, tho' in things moſt directly contrary to their own Minds and Inclination. Beſides this, if you ſhould reſuſe to Gratify in any thing, One that has done you former Kindneſſes, the World will be ready to call you *Ungrateful*, the moſt odious Reproach, that can be caſt on any One.

Nay and wicked Men will not ſometimes ſtick to Bribe you alſo with Promiſes and Propoſals of Profit and Advantages, if you will ſerve 'em in their ill Deſigns. This One would think not ſo dangerous a Temptation to Sin, becauſe more open, and not ſo Inſinuating a way as the former; but God knows, too many do knowingly and wilfully barter away their poor Souls, and plainly ſell 'em to the Devil, contracting to commit this, or that Sin; as for Inſtance, to take a falſe Oath, to forge Writings, to make a Lie in another's behalf, upon the Promiſe, or Intimation of ſome Reward for ſo doing. Thus will wicked Men, ſome by Kindneſſes, ſome by Promiſes, Oblige you, if they can, to ſerve 'em by your Sins.

And ſome on the other hand will be no leſs Induſtrious by Diſcouragements, nay Threatnings to hinder you in the diſcharging your Duty, and a good Conſcience. Religion will ſometimes put you upon doing thoſe things, that will prejudice your worldly Intereſts, and ſtir up the Wrath of thoſe, that are Superior to you. And indeed in this Caſe, a *Man's worſt Enemies ſhall be thoſe of his own Houſe*; and when either you muſt Sin, or Suffer, none will be ſo forward to Tempt you to Sin, rather than to Suffer, as your neareſt Relations and Acquaintance: And what muſt Wife, and Children, and Family do, if you ſhould talk of Forſaking all, and of following Chriſt in the Preſervation of a good Conſcience, will be Argument, that the Friend of your own Boſom will ſtrongly urge you withal.

But the more common Temptation diſcouraging Men in the Diſcharge of their Duty, eſpecially ſuch as are of a low Rank and Condition in the World, are the Frowns and Threats of thoſe, that are above 'em. Hence a Miniſter in low Circumſtances, ſhall



venture hard, if he offers to Reprove a Great Man, tho' a Great Sinner. And you shall scarcely ever know an Officer, tho' never so strictly oblig'd thereunto by his Oath, present, in order to Punishment, the Man of Power and Interest in his Parish, for his Oaths, his Riots, and the most outrageous Immoralities, which he so scandalously commits.

I.  
Kindnesses  
must not cor-  
rupt us to Sin.

And now what shall be done, with reference to these manifold Encouragements to Sin, and Discouragements to Vertue, which you shall meet withal from wicked Men? Why, in the first Place, have a special Care you be not Inveigled by the pretended Kindness of any Person, be he who, or what he will. Let not the Obligations of your Friend, or Acquaintance cause you to strain Truth, when you are call'd to give Testimony in his Cause. Take care you be not then wrought upon by any Sence of Kindness to Perjure your selves for him, by declaring either more than Truth, or by speaking not the whole Truth, when it would make against him. Consider what Kindness has been done you, if you must sin against God, and your own Soul, to Pleasure your Friend in Return for it; It was but a Bait to take you, a Snare to Entrap, and a pleasant Poison given to destroy you. "You ought indeed, as an honest Pagan says excellently well, to be assistant to him in his honest Endeavours, but not in his Knaveries; in his Counsels, not in his Tricks; in appearing as Evidence for him, but not in a Cheat; and you must bear a share in the Misfortunes of your Friend, but not in his Acts of Injustice.

II.  
Promises  
must not bribe  
us.

Secondly, As to any Promises, wherewith wicked Men may so Tempt you, as to Hire you to Sin, God forbid, there should be a Necessity to bid you Reject and Detest them. But if there be any need to Fortify any here against such a Temptation, the meer Foolishness of the Bargain you will make, will sufficiently move you to Spurn at them; for if it be an *unprofitable*, a very unprofitable Bargain, tho' a Man should *Gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul*, as it is said, *Mark 8. 36.* Oh! What ill Husbandry, what Stupidity is it, for a Trifle of worldly Wealth, or Advantage to barter it away?

III.  
Discourage-  
ments must  
not hinder us  
from dischar-  
ging our  
Duty.

And Thirdly, As for those who shall hereafter discourage you from suffering for Righteousness sake, when call'd thereunto, by laying before you the Ruine you will thereby bring upon your selves and Families; why you must consider, that in such Case, our Saviour tells us, that a Man must even *Hate Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, or he cannot be his Disciple; and that whosoever doth not bear his Cross, and come after him, shall not be his Disciple, Luk. 14. 26, 27.*

Nor, Fourth-  
ly, must  
Threatnings,  
or Frowns  
fright us  
from it.

Nor Lastly must a Souldier of Jesus Christ be frightened out of the way of his Duty, or Aw'd into any sinful, or slavish Compliance, by the *Threats and Frowns of any Man living*: Shrink not from the Exercise of Religion and Uprightness, because many about you, and they perhaps Above, or Richer than you, are profane and lewd, and utterly regardless of any thing that is Good, and moreover do Discourage and Affront it. For this if you should, you will most certainly offend your Great Lord and Master, the Lord of Heaven



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Heaven and Earth, and who has call'd upon you, not to fear a mortal Man; no, tho' he could *Kill the Body, but to be afraid of displeasing him rather, who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell; Yea, I say unto you, fear him, Luk. 12. 4.*

And now, Lastly, I cannot call to Mind any other Temptations, usual amongst wicked Men, to Tempt others to Sin, besides *Some evil Customs, Evil Customs so rise amongst many.* That the Heathen Idolatries, and those filthy Practices, committed in 'em, were so universally Complied with, by all sorts of Men in the Pagan World, was, because they were Commended and Established by Publick Custom. Many of their wisest Men and Philosophers, had other Conceptions of God, than to think it was fit, to *Change the Glory of God, into the Similitude of an Ox, that eateth Grasse;* and thought also, he ought to be Worshipt, not by Fooleries and Impurities, but with a chaste Mind and a clean Heart. And yet even those Men submitted to *Common Custom,* and whatever they thought, or spoke Privately, amongst themselves, they acted and spoke in Publick, as the rest did. And it was to the Prevalency of Custom, that the Apostle imputed those Enormities of the *Ephesians,* before their Conversion, telling 'em, that *In time past they walked according to the Course of this World,* Eph. 2. 2. And indeed so great is the Power of Evil Custom, that it does still, amongst Christians, constrain Persons to do many ill Things, even contrary to their Nature and Inclinations, as well as Religion. And when grown prevalent and common, it does strangely take off the sence and fear of Hurt, in the most Unchristian Practices.

Custom, I say, does still amongst Christians, constrain Persons to do many ill Things, even contrary to their Nature and Inclinations, as well as Religion. Hence among the *Men of Honour,* as they would be thought, shall many become even Self-murderers, meerly in Compliance with Custom; insomuch, that those Persons, who of all men Living, have most reason to preserve their Lives, having all their good Things they can ever expect, in this World, yet desperately spill one another's Blood in your cursed Duels. It is no Inclination in these men, I dare say, to be so Prodigal of their dear Lives, that makes 'em so desperately throw 'em away; but meerly out of a *Cowardly Fear,* they should be Branded with Disgrace, for not complying with so common a Custom, amongst Persons of their own Character. So again, among Persons of all Ranks, you shall have men of no manner of Inclinations to Intemperate Drinking, yet when they come to any Great Man's House, where it is the barbarous and brutish Custom of *Drinking Men hard:* Yet at such times they will not scruple to Exceed very far. It is the *Custom of the Place,* they'll say, and they were forc'd to it, they could nor help it.

And Custom also, when grown prevalent and common among Societies of Men, will strangely take off the Sence and Fear of Hurt in the most Unchristian Practices. Hence, amongst Sea-men and Souldiers, the most outrageous Whoredoms and Adulteries, and the most execrable Oaths and Curses, are hardly accounted amongst the number of Sins. And all the Arts of Cheating and Over-reaching, nay of downright Lying, and Swearing to the Soundness and Goodness of bad Commodities, is little scrupled amongst some sort of

H h h

Dealers,

*Custom takes off the Sence and Fear of Hurt in the most Unchristian Practices.*

Dealers, the thing is grown so common. And Custom it is, which is so commonly Pleaded for the *Omission* of most necessary Duties, as well as the *Commission* of most horrid Sins. Hence do Multitudes make not the least scruple of Absenting, their whole Lives, from the Blessed Sacrament, because it is so common amongst many to do so. Thus powerful, you see, are the Evil Customs of the World, so as almost to force Men, whether they will or no, to do many ill things; and what is worse, to seare their Consciences in the Commission of the worst Sins, and in the Omission of the chiefest Duties.

*A Christian must courageously and vigorously renounce, and withstand the Force of all sinful Customs whatsoever.*

And now, what must a Christian do in this Case? Custom we know is a *Second Nature*, and when it has been of a long Date, *Time out of Mind*, as the Phrase is, *it pleads Prescription*, and obtains the Force of a Law amongst Men. So that be a Custom never so contrary to Honesty, Sobriety, to common Sense and Reason, or any the Laws of Christianity, an old Custom must not be broken; it is the Custom of the Place, and must be kept up: Such are the Sentiments of the Vulgar in this matter. But you must resolve with all Courage and Stedfastness, like true Souldiers of Jesus Christ, to *Renounce* and *Withstand* the Force of all sinful Customs whatsoever, and not to suffer your selves to be over-born thereby into any sinful Compliances.

When Christianity was first Preach'd amongst Men, such barbarous and brutish Customs had of a long time prevail'd over the greatest Part of the Heathen World, that many Practices which the meer Light of Nature would teach Men to Abandon, as Sins and Wounds of Conscience, "Were, as the Learned Dr. *Hammond* observes, Embrac'd by whole Nations at once, and continued "in without any Check, as innocent, sinless Qualities, Nature and "Reason being so early engag'd, and silenc'd by popular Custom, and "vicious Education, that many knew it not to be a Sin to Steal, or "Rob, if they were so Cunning, as not to be taken; others to Kill, "and Eat their Aged Parents (conceiving that by this means they "gave 'em a more Honourable Burial;) others to throw themselves "murderously into the Flames, to accompany their Dead Princes "out of the World. Many the like irrational Sins, through some "local Customs got the Reputation, not only of sinless and lawful, "but of laudable also. But all who Embrac'd Christianity, as they were obliged by their Baptismal Vow, to forsake those and the like Heathenish Customs, (for to such this Vow did particularly relate) so they did presently beat them down wherever the Christian Religion prevail'd, insomuch that in few Ages, there were not the least Foot-steps thereof remaining. And so must you likewise vigorously withstand all Customs that are *Immoral*, wherever, and by whomsoever, and how long soever they have obtain'd.

*Such only as are Immoral are to be Renounced.*

I do say, All Customs that are *Immoral*: For I do not mean, that a Christian must turn Cynick, a dogged and sower Lump of Earth, surly, and uncivil, and quarrelling with the innocent Modes of Humane Society. That is as much a Fault on the other side, to think that Christianity, the calmest and the sweetest Religion in the World, does oblige Men to ill Manners. But those Customs the Force of whose Temptations I would have you all to Resist, and

and utterly to Renounce, are such as I before mention'd, and which are apparently sinful and wicked, either tending to lessen the Guilt of Sin, or to make it none at all.

I am sensible there is something of Difficulty in this Part of our Warfare above any other. Barely to refuse Compliance with, but much more to oppose Evil Men in their sinful Customs and Practices, will mightily provoke their Indignation. He sails against the Wind that does so, and swims against the Stream. He shall have Multitudes will thwart him, and will load him with hard Reproaches; will call him singular and precise Fool for his Pains, and what not? He must have a great deal of Courage that opposes a Multitude in doing Evil, or will not comply with 'em in it. But such must the Souldier of Jesus Christ be, One that dares Incur the greatest Displeasure, rather than shrink from his Duty; and One that will not be afraid to shew his Dislike of any vicious Customs, when there is just Occasion for it.

And this indeed is true *Courage*, to despise all Opposition in the way of Duty, and he that can Unconcernedly pass through a Multitude, Reproaching and Vilifying him for his Pains, in Pursuit of Vertue, is more Heroick and Brave, than he that with his Sword in his Hand cuts open a way to the Taking of a Fort. He that Reproves a Sin, or Renounces an Ungodly Custom, may have more of true Fortitude, than he that Pushes on through drawn Swords, for it is a sign he fears not those Weapons which wound deepest, an embitter'd and envenom'd Tongue.

It is plain beyond all Contradiction, I do think, that when Men in Opposition to their Inclination, and Reason, and Religion dictating the contrary, do comply with others in Drinking of Healths to Excess, in profane or loose Talk, or the like: It is plain, I say, that it is out of fear of Reproaches, and for want of Courage, that Men do thus Sin. Nay, I dare be bold to affirm, however like a Paradox it may appear to some, That it is out of Fear, and for want of true Courage, that Men fight Duels, when they are Provokt, or Affronted. They are afraid, that if in Compliance to our Saviour's Doctrines of Meekness, Patience and Forbearance, they should put up Affronts, they would be Reproacht and Scorn'd by the Multitude, and be term'd Cowards, and therefore do desperately (but enough against their secret Inclinations, I dare say) betake themselves to this Barbarous and Fool-hardy way of shewing themselves Men of Honour.

But true Courage and Bravery, Philosophy, and Religion, and the sober Reason of all wise Men tell us, will despise the vain Opinions of the Unthinking and Impious Croud, which, for the most part, are in the wrong; and will steddily pursue what is Vertuous, and Fit, and Reasonable, and Religious, notwithstanding the foolish Reproaches of the Many. So that to retain One's Integrity and Vertue, and an unpolluted Conscience, in the midst of common and prevailing Customs of Sin and Vice, I dare be bold to assert, the Noblest and most Heroick piece of Courage.

And accordingly it will be Rewarded with a Noble Testimony by our Blessed Saviour, when to have his Testimony will be beyond the Applauses of the whole World. To Renounce and Oppose the Ir-



religious and Profane Customs of wicked Men, is an Eminent piece of Christian Confession, and *He who Confesses him before Men, the same will the Son of Man Confess*, Own as his Faithful Servant, and Applaud as a Noble Confessor, *before the Angels of God*, Luk. 12. 8.

And let this suffice, to have spoken concerning the wicked Men of the World, that you must so far Renounce both them, and their wicked ways, as *Never to become Tempters your selves of others to Sin, nor to yield your selves a Prey to other Men's Temptations*, but must utterly refuse Conformity to them, and all their ways, whereby they would have you Offend God, and Violate your Covenant with him, and your Vows in Baptism, and thereby Forfeit all your Title, and Hopes of Happiness.

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THE

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## T H E Nineteenth Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the flesh.**

**H**AVING fully Survey'd the *World*, and all therein contain'd, that is fit to be Renounc'd by every Christian: And having also Represented to you those Temptations, which are given by the *wicked World*, and how we must Resist them; I come now to Explain unto you, what is to be understood by the *Poms and Vanity of this wicked World*, and to shew you, how much it behoves Christians to Renounce, and to Despise them. And

First, *We will consider the Poms.* And  
Secondly, *The Vanity of this wicked World.*

And, First, As to *Poms*, these as they were part of the Pagan Idolatries: So they were what the Primitive Christians were more particularly concern'd to Renounce. But however, since the same Renunciation of the Poms of this World, is still retain'd in our Church, tho' the very same Things, which were at first meant thereby, are perhaps become Obsolete, and out of Use in Christendom: And yet it is not to be suppos'd, but that our Church had respect to something still in Use in the Christian World, as fit to be Renounc'd, under that Title, by every Disciple of JESUS: I shall therefore, together with a short Account of the Meaning of Poms, in the Sence they were Renounc'd by the Primitive Christians, take care, especially to shew you, what amongst us is most Analogous to the ancient Heathenish *Poms*, and bears such a near Resemblance to 'em, as to render these, our modern *Poms*, fit also to be Renounc'd by every Christian.

And, First, By Poms were Anciently meant (in the Opinion of our Learned and Excellent Dr. *Hammond*) those Pompous Shows and Spectacles exhibited by the Emperors, and Great Men of *Rome*, in the Roman Theaters, wherein Multitudes of Captive Wretches were put to Slay one another in their Sword-Plays, for the Diversion of the People. And indeed it is not unlikely, that thereby may be meant, not only those Bloody Sword-Plays, but all those *Scenical Representations and Plays* whatever, Acted in Memory of their false Gods, upon their Great Festivals, which were sometimes so very Lewd and Impious, (for Instance those, which were Acted in Honour of *Flora*,) that the People of *Rome* were asham'd to proceed in 'em, whilst *Cato*, a Person of Renown'd Vertue amongst 'em, was present in the Theater. They were also wonderfully Pompous,

I.  
Thereby  
were ancient-  
ly meant those  
pompous Spe-  
ctacles, Plays  
and Scenical  
Representati-  
ons exhibited  
in the Roman  
Theaters.

*Valer. Maxim.  
Lib. 2. Cap. 8.*

and the Scenes Magnificent, the greatest Grandees of *Rome* appearing at 'em, and having their proper Seats, or *Boxes*, appropriated to each Order and Rank of Great Men, according to their Degrees and Qualities. And here also very likely it was, that the Lewd Crew of both Sexes met together to make their Assignations; for near to the *Circus* and *Theater*, there were those Stews, where they withdrew to act their vile Abominations.

*Our Modern  
Plays no less  
Inferior to 'em  
in Impiety,  
than in Pom-  
pousness.*

And now, that which Approaches in these our Days, nearest to those sort of Heathenish Pumps, and which in Pompousness and Magnificence of Stage, are not much Inferior to them, are those Profane and Lewd Plays, Acted in our Publick Play-houses, where, for ought I know, more Souls are now Murder'd, than in the former were Bodies; more Profaneness utter'd, and more Lewd Assignations made, than at the Pagan Theaters: And how infinitely unfit then is it, that those kind of Diversions should be suffer'd in a Christian State, or that Persons professing Christianity should be permitted to go near 'em? The Primitive Fathers lookt upon the Theaters and Play-houses, as no other than the Devil's Territories, in so much, that it happening once, that when a Christian being prompted by Curiosity, to be present at the Spectacles therein, was possess'd by the Devil, the Father was not at all Startle'd at it, but readily own'd, that Satan had a Right to take that Person Captive, whom he found within his own Precincts. And if those, who frequent our Modern

*Est nihil omnino damnosius,  
quam spectaculis afficere;  
quando per Voluptatem fa-  
cilius, et praelibet obrepant  
vitia. Quid me exilissimas di-  
cers? Avarior, Ambitiosior,  
Luxuriosior, imo vero Crude-  
liber, et Inhumanior video Cui.  
Rhodi. Ant. Lib. Octa. c. 7.*

Play-houses, do generally return thence possess'd with a Spirit of Profaneness, Lust, or Vanity, it is but what may reasonably be expected, for tho' all Evil Conversation is Infectious; yet Vice does then most easily Insinuate it self into our Dispositions, and Flies to the very Heart, when the Poison is mixt with Pleasure, Wit, and Smartness of Conceit.

*And having  
such a malig-  
nant Influence  
upon Faith,  
and Manners,  
ought never to  
be frequented  
by Christians.*

And now, since it is Universally agreed amongst all serious Persons, that a more Irreligious Spirit did never Reign upon any Theater, than has in this last Age on our Modern Play-houses: "Since (as is the general Complaint) in these Houses Piety is so strangely Ridicul'd, the Holy and Reverend Name of God Profan'd, and his Glory and Interest render'd so Contemptible and Vile? Since the Youth especially of our Nation, are so allur'd hereby into the Love of, and Delight in Idleness, excessive Vanity, Revelings, Luxury, Wantonness, Lasciviousness, Whoredoms, and such Debaucheries by Oaths, Looseness of Conversation, and corrupt Atheistical Principles: Since our Gentlemen are here taught to Deride Religion, to Dissolve in Luxury, to Abandon themselves to their Pleasures, to be Debauchers of Women, to be Profuse and Extravagant in their Expences, and to be entirely Libertines: Since the Young Ladies of our Nation, are here thoroughly Instructed in Intrigues and Assignations, to Scoff at the prudent Reservedness and Modesty of the best of their Sex, to despise the wise Instructions of their Parents and Guardians, to be Disobedient to their Authority, and at last, without their Knowledge, or Consent, to Marry themselves to some loose, or lewd Libertine: And indeed since the Minds and Manners of the Great Ones especially, of both Sexes, are thereby so foully Corrupted, and their

" Af-



" Affections so sadly alienated from the Love of God and Goodness :  
 " All these things consider'd, 'twere greatly to be wisht, our Play-  
 " Houses were totally suppress'd. However, in the mean time, I  
 " think it concerns all, that will be secure from ever Apostatizing  
 " from the Faith of Christ, and a Religious Life, so far to Reject  
 " these our modern Pumps, as never to Enter within those Houses,  
 " where these Plays are acted.

Secondly, By Pumps, in the Sence of the Ancients (as some do think) are meant the Solemn *Processions* of the Heathens, wherein they carried the Images of their Gods, through the Streets of the City, in a most Pompous manner, all the Priests, Magistrates, and People of *Rome*, as *Tertullian* does Represent it, Attending and Paying their Veneration towards them.

II.  
 By Pumps in the sence of the Ancients were meant, the solemn Processions of the Heathens in Honour of their Gods.

And answerably to these, without the least straining of the meaning, in the present State of the Church, may be understood, those Idolatrous Processions amongst the Papists; where sometimes the Images of the Saints, sometimes the *Host*, is carried in the same Solemn manner, as among the Pagans, were the Images of their Gods: And the like Adoration and Worship requir'd from all, who accompany, or accidentally fall amongst 'em, out of Curiosity to observe their Vanities. And as amongst the Ancients, those were Censur'd as Partakers with the Heathen in their Idolatry, who went along with them, or were publick Spectators of 'em, as thereby signifying to the Eyes of Men, their Allowance and Approbation thereof, and of the Idolatry they contain'd; and were certain to be cast out of the *Communion of the Church* for the same: So those Protestant Gentlemen, who Traveling into Forreign Countries, out of Curiosity to observe the Popish Vanities, shall Voluntarily appear amongst the Train accompanying them, cannot be thought more Favourably of. And if through Force they are Compel'd to join in the Adoration of those Images, and shall rather comply, than suffer, they are wanting in Discharging that great Duty of *Confessing of Christ*, which is so strictly requir'd at our Hands, as ever we expect to have him *Confess us before God, and his Holy Angels*.

The Idolatrous Processions of the Papists, in honour of the Saints, answerable to these;

And must not therefore be joined in.

Thirdly, By Pumps may be meant reductively, all those Revels and Riotous Meetings of Youth, whereby our Great *Festivals* Piously Instituted by the Church, to be kept with Joyful Thanksgiving to God, for his singular Favours vouchsafed to the World, as at such times, are so sadly Profan'd by Drunkenness, lewd Songs and Ballads, profane and wanton Discourse, and the like. The Generality of our common People, seem to apprehend nothing Spiritual in the Great Feasts of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Whitsuntide*. And a *Holyday* is with them, the Profanest Day in the Year. But I will be bold to assert, with the Learned Dr. *Hammond*, that besides these other Sences of the Word *Pumps*; " All the sinful Courses, " that are us'd by Men in their Times of Jollity and Festivity, the " Luxury, and Riot, and unlawful Gaming; and all Kind of Ex- " cesses (which are but a Copying out the Heathen *Bacchanals*) are " Pumps to be Renounced by every Christian. All Riot and Excess, " lewd and wanton Actions, and Discourses are Sins, and that far " greater, and more punishable in Christians, than in Others; par- " ticularly than in Jews, whose Promises of an Earthly Plenty are

III.  
 By Pumps Reductively, may be meant the Revels & Drunken Riots of our Youth, at Wakes and Festivals.

"not so contrary and irreconcilable with Corporal Excesses, as are  
 "the spiritual Joys, that are the Christian's eminent Portion under  
 "Promise. And therefore these are turned out of the World by  
 "Christ, and by him transform'd and chang'd into spiritual Cele-  
 "brations, blessing and praising God, into Feasts of Charity, and  
 "sober Hospitality, and Bounty to the Poor, instead of those out-  
 "ward, costly vain Poms, which the Eye of the World is so plea-  
 "sed with.

These to be  
 Abstain'd  
 from.

*Quaecunque ex causa furint  
 producti primo, nil est pernicio-  
 sius: nec enim integritati.  
 Quippe turba omnis utique de-  
 nimo gravis et noxia; nec  
 enim quos extulisti mores un-  
 quam referre; nemo non ru-  
 biginis aliquid aut imprimit  
 aut desolentibus ostendit. Cael.  
 Rhodgi. Lib. Octav. c. 7.*

And therefore, as I would advise you to be little fond of Wakes, and such like Meetings of promiscuous Company, where little Good, and a great deal of Ill is commonly learnt: So especially, let me Entreat you, never to take into your Hands, much less to learn those wanton Ballads by Heart, which do insensibly convey the Poison of ill Morals into the Soul, and such a dis-relish to spiritual Thoughts and Exercises, as can many times be never wore off. And so much for the Poms of the World.

Vanity of the  
 World,  
 What?

Secondly, And as the Poms, so you are also to Renounce and Reject the *Vanity of this World*. And what indeed that does mean, it is not so hard to guess, for we have it every Day before our Eyes. And that which I do suppose is chiefly thereby meant, are all *Affectation of Grandeur and Greatness in sumptuous Houses, rich Furniture, uppermost Places, Titles of Respect, and costly Apparel*. True it is, these things are not in themselves purely and absolutely Unlawful, but may be enjoy'd without Sin, by those who are lawfully possessors of 'em. Nevertheless these have an Aptness in them, more than most other things of the World, to corrupt Men's Minds, and to *Alienate their Affections* from the Love of God, and Goodness: However the *Affectation* of 'em is undoubtedly a *Sinful Vanity to be Renounced* by every Christian. And such vain Affectation does appear in these Cases following:

I.

When Persons  
 out-go their  
 Ability, in  
 Building and  
 Furniture.

First, *As to sumptuous Houses, and rich Furniture, when Persons out-go their Ability* in compassing those things, to the Ruine, or great Prejudice of their Families and Posterity; and do Build and Buy, not paying the Labourer, and the Tradesman; and when with all their care to Beautify and Adorn their own Houses, they care not how Ruinous and Indecent the Houses of God do lye. Thus to affect Sumptuousness, I say, is a sinful Vanity. Thus the Prophet Jeremy, 22. 13, 14. pronounceth a *Woe* unto him that buildeth his House by Unrighteousness, and his Chambers by Wrong, that useth his Neighbours Service without Wages, and giveth him not for his Work; that saith, I will build me a wide House, and large Chambers, and cutteth him out Windows, and it is cieled with Cedar, and painted with Vermilion. And as for those who build, and deck, and trim up their own Houses, and suffer God's House to be in Ruine and Decay, to lye uncomely and nastily, they had best to consider how ill God will take it, as appears from that of Hag. 1. 4. *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in the cieled Houses, and this House lye wast?* And in the Verses following, he denounceth a Consumption on all they have, for such Impiety. So sinful a thing is the vain Affectation of sumptuous Houses, and rich Furniture, when joined

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joined to the Prejudice of others, and the Contempt of God, and so fit therefore to be Renounced by every Christian.

Secondly, *And so likewise is the vain Affectation of the Uppermost Places.* This is a Vanity, that is perhaps more usual amongst the lowest Rank of People, (which One would least expect) than those of Birth and Quality, tho' it is in none so unseemly as in them. I have with Admiration beheld Farmers, nay, poor Tenants, nay, Labourer's Wives, swell till they almost burst with Envy, at their Neighbour's Stepping before, or Sitting above 'em; and even in the House of God, so expressly contrary to our Saviour's Rule, *Not to seek the chief Seats in the Synagogues*: I have known 'em strive for the uppermost Places, and to be whole Months, nay, Years afterwards out of Charity, and that almost beyond Reconciliation, meerly upon the account of Precedence: A thing so unseemly, and so odious a piece of Vanity, especially in those of lower Rank, that I can hardly forbear to express my self with Indignation concerning it; but I shall only advise you in the Words of our Saviour, *Mark. 12. 38, 39.* to beware of imitating the Scribes and Pharisees (the worst Patterns you can follow) *Who love the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and the uppermost Rooms at Feasts.* It is a Pride and Vanity fit only for Scribes and Pharisees, the Proudest Men on Earth, but infinitely unbecoming the Disciples of the Meek and Humble JESUS, who when they strive for Place, it must be, not to take, but to give it, *In Honour preferring one another, Rom. 12. 10.*

II.  
It appears in striving for Precedence.

Thirdly, *Again of like Nature to this last piece of Vanity, is the Ambition, and vain Affectation of Titles of Respect and Honour above ones Quality and Degree; and the desire to be esteemed by others more Vertuous and Good, than we really are in our selves.* The meanest Persons that are now a-days, will take it ill, if they have not those Titles of Respect given them, which do not at all belong to them, and for Distinction sake, are due to those above 'em. And even Good Men, who can heartily own, and sorrowfully bewail in their Confessions to God, that they are vile Sinners, will hardly endure that others should say so, or think so ill of 'em. But so far should we be from affecting such Respects, as are above our Merit, that we should not over-eagerly desire those that are deserv'd, and due to us; nor must we Plume and Pride our selves when we have 'em. To do otherwise proceeds from an Ambition, which ill-becomes the Disciples of Him, that was so exceeding Lowly; *Who, tho' he was Lord of all, yet came here into the World, not to be Ministred unto, but to Minister, Matth. 20. 28.* And we should not be angry with others, that do think, or speak ill of us, but at our selves, that we deserve to be so thought, or spoke of. And herein also we have our Blessed Saviour for our Example, who tho' *He he did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth, when he was Reviled, Reviled not again, 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23.*

III.  
In affecting Titles above ones Quality, and to be esteem'd Vertuous above ones Desert.

Fourthly, The last Instance of sinful Vanity does appear in the *Affectation of costly Apparel and Ornaments, when Persons exceed what becomes their Rank and Degree in what they wear; when they are proud of their Cloaths and Ornaments; when they Adorn themselves to undue Ends and Purposes; and lastly, when they spend too much Time, and at unfitting Seasons therein.*

IV.  
In the vain Affectation of costly Apparel and Ornaments: As



I. First, As for the use of costly Ornaments, for Distinction sake, it seems to be intimated by our Saviour, when he says, that *Those who wear soft Raiment, are in Kings Houses*, Matth. 11. 8. And no doubt, as Honour is to be paid to whom *Honour is due*, so a Distinction in Habits, according to the Dignity and Quality of Persons is allowable and useful; but this Distinction is quite lost, when Persons of lower Rank do strive to be seen as early in a new Dress, and as Rich in their Attire, as those that are above 'em.

II. Secondly, And the Vanity is Intolerable, when Persons of either Sex, of what Rank and Quality soever they be, grow Proud of their Dress, so as to be pufft up in their own Minds on so mean an Account; and Insolent, so as to despise others, for want of the like; as if outward Ornaments can add any thing to real and inward Worth: When alas! we every Day behold many an ignorant, empty, stupid Wretch; and many a vicious Beast, flutter in a gaudy Garb, when those Minds, that are best adorn'd with Wisdom and Vertue, choose but plain and mean Apparel. But such vain Self-admirers would do well to consider, how ill it far'd with *Herod*, when Array'd in his Royal Apparel, and receiving the profane Applauses of the gazing Croud, he forgot himself, *And gave not the Glory to God*, as you may see, *Act. 12. 21, 22, 23. He was eaten up with Worms*; and if those Worms were Lice, it was a Punishment exactly suited to his Pride.

III. Thirdly, But the Vanity of those is most odious in the sight both of God, and Man, who Deck themselves to inflame Lust in the Beholders, and like Her mention'd, *Prov. 7. 10. Meet men in the Attire of an Harlot*. "It is a kind of Adultery, says the Excellent *Hammond*, in that Woman, who not only Exposes and Prostitutes her self to the Eyes of Men, but so Dresses, and sets her self out to that End she may be thus Lookt upon, and call to her self the Eyes of all Men. If she strike not, wound not others, she shall yet be Punisht; for she hath mixt the Potion, prepar'd the Poison, tho' she hath not given the Cup to Drink: Yes, and hath done that too, tho' none be found, that will Drink of it. It seems, there is a piece of Christian Chastity requir'd of Women in this Kind, that is not generally thought on, but would be carefully practiced, if all of the Female Sex would seriously read over, and consider that admirable place in *Isaiah 3*. describing the Vanity and Wickedness of Women in this Respect, and the Anger of God towards 'em for it. It is a Character of Women's Vanity too long here to give you, but begins at the 16th Verse of the 3d Chapter, ending at the 25th. and you had best read it at your Leisure, and you cannot too often meditate upon it. Our Church is pleas'd to Condescend in one of her Homilies, to consider the Excuses that such make, who paint their Faces, and deck themselves in Gay Apparel, and Dress immodestly, "That it is to please their Husband, to delight his Eyes, "and Retain his Love towards them; but she plainly tells them, "That thereby they go about to please others, rather than their Husbands; that it is to provoke others to Tempt 'em, to deceive their Souls, by the Bait of such Pomp and Pride, and that they "make of the indecent Apparel of the Body, the Devil's Net, to "catch the Souls of them, which behold 'em.

Fourthly,

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But Fourthly, and Lastly, the Pride and Vanity of those is Sacrilegious, who spend so much of their Time in this weighty Business every Morning, that they have not room to say their Prayers; nay, who are so long and critical in Decking themselves on the Lord's Day, that the Service of God is almost over before they can force themselves from their Glasse: Such, I say, are plainly Sacrilegious in Robbing God of his Portion of Time, and employing that in setting forth their own Glory, which should be wholly spent to his Honour. And they are most injurious to their own Souls in Decking their Carcasses with outward Ornaments, when they should be Adorning their Souls with inward and Divine Graces. "But alas! they that are much occupied, says our Homily, in caring for things pertaining to the Body, are most commonly Negligent and Careless in matters, that concern the Soul.

*Lastly, when they spend too much Time, and at unprofitable Seasons therein.*

Well, But after all I am sensible, I have fall'n upon as Nice a Subject as any can be Handled, there being Nothing wherein the World will, with so much Uneasiness bear a Contradiction, as in this Point of its Vanities, and especially in the matter of Apparel: For whilst some are so Strait-lac'd, as to Censure every thing, that is Ornamental in our way of Living; and so many others, on the contrary, are so strangely Profuse to a high degree of Vanity, it is hard to determine this case, so as not to incur the Prejudice of one, or other. I will therefore choose to give, in the Words of the Learned Dr. Hammond, the true State of this matter, shewing what Allowances, without imputation of Vanity, may be granted in the Use of *Ornaments*; and how far, on the other side, they are to be Renounc'd by you.

And herein this Great Father of our Church gives this prudent Advice, "That none go above what the Soberer and Graver sort of his Quality and Condition do use; that they Abstain, as much as may be, from the frequent Changing and Inventing of Fashions, from the being earliest in every New Dress, or from Singularity of Apparel, us'd on purpose, and on that Affectation, because it is Singular; for all these seem so far to Betray the sinful Principle, that tho' it is not reasonable, for one Man to judge another, for every thing of this nature; yet it will be fit for all, that do thus, to examine and charge it upon themselves, and if they cannot perfectly clear themselves from that evil Principle, or worse End, then to remember, that this is it, which they Renounced in their Baptism.

"The short is this, *Decency* is that, he says, which must give Limits to Attires: This Decency is to be taken from that, which is Usual and Customary amongst those, with whom we Live, and is oft varied by Change of Times, and of the Condition of the Age, or Dignity of each Person (that being Comely for one Age, and Sex, and Quality of Persons, which is not for another:) And He, or She, that rests contented with those ways of Adorning themselves, which are most usual among the more Sober and Grave of their Age and Quality, are not to be judg'd guilty of the Breach of this Vow; tho' there are perhaps some Things in their Attire, Gold, Jewels, and the like, which might be thought to own this Title of *Pomps* and *Vanities*, as those words signify Bravery and Superfluity.

*Decency according to what is suitable to Age, Sex, or Quality, the Rule in this Case.*

“Nevertheless the Truth is, (as he goes on) it were to be wisht,  
“that Men and Women of the highest Quality, would choose to  
“Distinguish themselves from others, rather by that *Ornament of a*  
“*meek and quiet Spirit* (commended to the weaker Sex, by St. Peter,  
“as a far more amiable Ornament, than that of Apparel;) and  
“make shew of their Wealth, by those more profitable, beneficial  
“Expences, for the supply of the Wants of others. And no doubt,  
“this would contribute more to their own Ends, (if they be the  
“Aims of Christians) and would set them out more in the Opinion  
“of all wise and good Persons. But this being affirm’d, will not con-  
“clude the Use of any of those Ornaments, which are agreeable to  
“Time, and Place, and Callings, to be Sinful, or of the Number of  
“those Vanities, that are to be Renounced in our Baptism.

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T H E

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T H E  
XX. Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.**

**I**N the Explication of these Words, I have fully laid before you the Stratagems and Wiles of *Satan*, and the various *Temptations* also wherewith the *World* doth assault us, to withdraw us from God, and to make us break our *Covenant* with him. And it only remains to compleat this Account of our Spiritual Warfare, to consider *the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, and to know in what sense, and how far we are also to Renounce and Resist them.

And indeed this is a most Material and Important Part of Christian Knowledge. To Know our selves, is next in Dignity and Usefulness to the Knowledge of God himself. And if we did but distinctly Know the Imperfection and Weaknesses of our Corrupted Nature, and of all the Powers and Faculties within us; neither the whole World with all its formidable Host of Temptations, nor *Satan* himself Marshalling and managing of 'em against us, with all the Malice and Cunning he is Master of, would be in much danger of doing us hurt. For tho' our case is that of a Besieged Fort, to take which there are not only a numerous Army, under the Conduct of a wary General, who narrowly views every part of us, and orders the Attack where he finds us weakest; But what is worse, the whole Fabrick of our Corrupted Nature is extremely decay'd; and all the Faculties and Powers thereof, are but so many Traitors within us ready to deliver us up to our Enemies. Yet however in Knowing the Weakness of our Nature, we may be able to repair its Decays; and by Knowing also the Treachery of all its Faculties, we shall successfully prevent their delivering of us up to our Adversaries: And therefore, for the more full discovery of so Useful and Important a Subject to you,

*To know our selves, especially our natural Imperfection, a most useful part of Knowledge.*

1. *I will shew you what is meant by the Flesh.*
2. *What by the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; and, together with each of these, will also declare unto you in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce the Flesh and its sinful Lusts. And,*

The Flesh variously expressed.

First, Let us enquire what is meant by the *Flesh*, and in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce the *Flesh*. And in order to this, we are to consider, that as the Knowledge of Things does much depend upon understanding those Phrases whereby they are usually express'd; so there are very many Words in the Holy Writings, of like Meaning and Importance with this of the *Flesh*. And indeed there is not any one thing so variously express'd in the Holy Scriptures as this is. It is called the *Old Man*, as to denote the Antiquity of this Corruption, and from whom it descended, even from *Adam*, the first Father of us all; so to signify that it has universally infected the whole Race of Mankind. It is called the *Natural Man*, both because this Corruption over-spreadeth the whole Nature, and because it is become Natural to Man in this Corrupt State to Sin. It is called the *Flesh*, because the very Soul in a Man, and all its Faculties, are Carnal and Sensual. And, Lastly, 'tis termed *Evil Concupiscence*, because this Fleishly Nature of ours Lusteth after Evil Things. And so much for the meaning of the Word *Flesh*, and its synonymous Phrases.

What is meant by the *Flesh*.

And now, by the help of what has been said, we may form this Account of the *Flesh*, That it is the whole *Unregenerate Nature of Man*, as spoil'd as to its Original Frame and Constitution, and despoil'd of that Image of God, consisting in the Perfection, Order, and Purity of all his Faculties, whereby he was Originally making towards GOD, his Chief End and Happiness. And it is that Corruption of this his Nature and Faculties, whereby he is inordinately Converted in all the Tendencies of Soul and Body, and of all the Faculties and Powers thereof towards the Creature.

1. The whole Unregenerate Nature of Man, Soul and Body.

1. I say by the *Flesh*, is meant the whole *Unregenerate Nature of Man*; not only the Body, but also the Soul; not only the Inferior Powers, as the Affections, Lusts and Appetites; but also the Superior Faculties, as the Understanding, Conscience, and the Will. For it is not only said, *Tit. 1. 15. That the Mind and Conscience is defil'd*; but the Mind, as well as the Body, is said to be *Fleishly*, *Col. 2. 18. and Carnal*, *Rom. 8. 7.* And, *Gal. 5. 20* we find *Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Seditions, Heresies*, reckon'd amongst the *Works of the Flesh*, tho' they are Sins that have their residence in the Mind only: So that the whole Man, as he is by Nature, and all the Faculties of his Soul as well as Body, as they are unregenerate, and till they are sanctified by the Spirit and Grace of God, come under this one Title of the *Flesh*. But,

2. The whole Man not as created by God, but as he is now in the State of Corrupted Nature.

2. The *Flesh* is the whole Man; not as he was Created by God, but as he is now in the State of Corrupted Nature. No, Humane Nature, as it came out of God's Hands, was of another Frame and Constitution to what it appears to be now in its Natural State and Condition. *God made Man upright, but he sought out many Inventions*, *Eccl. 7. 24.* He has found out many ways to crook and bend down towards the Earth that Upright Nature which God once gave him.

3. As spoil'd in his Original Frame and Constitution, as despoil'd of the Image of God, and as inordinately tending towards the Creature.

3. Then the *Flesh* is the whole *Unregenerate Nature of Man*, as it is spoil'd as to its Original Frame and Constitution, and as it is inordinately converted in all the Tendencies of Soul and Body, and of all the Faculties and Powers thereof, towards the Creature. In order to the more perfect Understanding of which Matter, we must in the first place enquire what was the Original Frame and Constitution of Man:

In

In what the Image of God, wherein he was created at first, consisted; And how that in all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, his whole Bent and Inclinations were originally Heavenward; for by thus comparing the upright Nature of Man, as it was at first Created, with what it now is in this State of Corruption, we shall be able clearly to apprehend what is meant by the Flesh, the important Subject of our present Enquiry.

And now as to the Original Frame and Constitution of our Nature, wherein God made us, it seems, to have been this. He gave Man a Faculty of Understanding, whereby he could Contemplate upon, and Know in an Extraordinary Measure, the wonderful Nature and Perfections of his Creator! his Amazing Works of Creation! his Surprising Works of Providence! and thereby was able to discover the Good and Evil in any Objects that were presented to him. Next, he plac'd in his Bosom another wonderful Faculty, called Conscience; which is the practical Judgment in every Man, whereby his own Mind, out of that vast Treasure of useful Knowledge, did dictate to him what was Good, and to be Chosen; what was Evil, and to be refus'd by him; and upon which Choice of Good, and Rejecting of Evil, its Office was to give its Testimony of Well-done, to the Good and Faithful Servant, to his unspeakable Comfort and Satisfaction. Next, in the Upright Nature of Man, as it bore upon it the Image and Likeness of God, there was plac'd a Will, which of it self is a blind Faculty, and chuses and refuses, according to the Information of others. And in the State of Innocence, it was entirely complying with the Dictates of Reason and Conscience. And to descend from the Rational to the Inferior and Bodily Powers: It was the Divine Goodness did implant in our Natures those, which we call the Passions and Affections in a Man; which are principally these, *Admiration, Love, and Hatred*. And it was to very Excellent Purposes that these were given us. The Use of Admiration was, as to Things which should offer themselves to our Approbation; if Good, that we might put a true value upon them according to their Worth; if Bad, that we might despise 'em, according to the Vanity and Evil we should find in 'em. And as to the two other principal Passions of Love and Hatred, God's Design in implanting in our hearts the former, was to move and stir us up with Vigour and Activity, to pursue whatever we should find good and convenient to us. And the Passion of Hatred was put into our Natures, that we might avoid on the contrary whatever might be found Hurtful and Offensive. And it was no other than the Divine Goodness, which in the Nature of Man did place certain Appetites and Lusts. Every particular Man had, even at his first Creation, Appetites to Food and Sustenance, in order to preserve his own Being in Life and Health. And Cupidity or the Inclinations of the Sex to each other, was in order to the Multiplication of Mankind.

This now was the Original Frame and Constitution of Man. And in the Perfection, Order, and Purity of all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, according to this Original Frame and Constitution, did the Image of God, in which he was at first Created, consist. So long as the whole Nature of Man was perfect in all parts, the Understanding quick in discerning momentous and weighty Truths, the Conscience faithful in Dictating Right ways, the Will entirely Obedient

*The Original  
Frame and  
Constitution  
of Humane  
Nature, what.*

*The Image of  
God, wherein  
Man was at  
first Created,  
what.*



dient to the Directions of Conscience and Reason, so long as the Affections were only plac'd upon worthy Objects, and the Lusts and Appetites were always under the Power and Government of Right Reason; so long as Man remained in this State, the Image of God continued unfulfilled.

*The Bent and Inclination of the Soul towards God, what.*

And so long as he continued thus, it is plain also, that the whole Bent and Inclination of the Soul was towards God, that to him it did point in all its Motions, and did fix upon him as the End of all its Actions; and did love him with the intensest degrees of Affection. And that even the Bodily Part was perfectly compliant with the Soul in serving it entirely and solely to that End. So that thus you see what was the Original Frame and Constitution of Man: In what the Image of God, wherein he was created at first, consisted: And that in all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, his whole Bent and Inclinations were Heaven-ward.

But now in the Unregenerate Nature all this Excellent Frame and Constitution is broken: This Image of God is defac'd; and all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, instead of Inclining towards, and Centring upon God and Heavenly Things, tend downwards towards the Creature.

*1. In the Unregenerate Nature of the Original Frame and Constitution of Man, wherein he was Created, is broken.*

1. In the Unregenerate Nature, I say; That Excellent Frame and Constitution, wherein Man was Originally Created, is now broken: So that instead of that Harmonious Subordination of the Inferior Faculties to the Superior; instead of the Wills being subject to the Dictates of the Understanding, and the Affections being subject to the Commands and Sovereignty of the Will, and the Lusts and Appetites being Obedient to Right Reason, and a well inform'd Conscience; instead of this, the whole Order and Frame of Humane Nature is now turn'd upside down: The Affections, Lusts and Appetites do now Reign, and Reason and Conscience are dragg'd after them in miserable Slavery. And as to the Will of an Unregenerate Man, the most that it can do, is not without *Reluctance* and *Regret*, to comply with the Temptations of the Senses; like him in *St. Paul*, *I know that in me, that is, in my Flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not; for the Good that I would, I do not; but the Evil which I would not, that I do*, Rom. 7. 18; 19. The best that can be suppos'd of the Unregenerate Man is this, that after the Preaching of the Laws of God to him, and a Divine Light has been let thereby into his Understanding, he does approve in his own Mind of the Ways of God as most excellent. Such was he, in *St. Paul*, Rom. 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man*; that is, according to the Understanding or Superiour Faculty, contrary to the carnal or bodily part of him: such a one does approve of what the Laws of God do prescribe. But then alas he must own, that *he sees another Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in his Members*, v. 23. So that the State of an Unregenerate Man is a State of meer Confusion, Disorder, and Rebellion; the Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, rising up in Opposition to the Dictates of the Mind and Conscience: And it is a State of meer Impotency and Weakness, the Mind and Conscience being so far unable to govern the Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, that these latter

latter get the better of the day, carry the Mind and Reason captive, and force it slavishly to do what the Flesh requires to have done by it, so exceedingly spoil'd, and broken in the Unregenerate Nature, is all that Excellent Frame and Constitution wherein Man was at first Created.

2. And consequently then, *the Image of God*, wherein Man was at first Created, must needs be miserably defaced in a State of Unregeneracy. For why? In that Excellent Perfection and Order, which appear'd in the Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature it was, that those lively Strokes of the Divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness, were plainly visible. But as a mishapen and monstrous Picture, in which there is nothing of Regularity and good Feature, cannot without Injury be said to Resemble some Excellent and Goodly Personage; so neither can the defac'd and deform'd Nature of an Unregenerate Man be said to be made *after the Likeness of God*. Some Faint and Remote Resemblances, true it is, do still remain under all those Defacements; even as in the Ruines of a Stately Palace, there may appear something of Admirable Architecture. There is still remaining in the most Corrupt Nature; True it is, that part of the Image of God which consisted in those things which are Essential to Man, as Man, that is, the Soul, and all its Faculties of Understanding, Will, and Affections, these do still remain the same for Substance as they were before. But the Image of God as it consists in our Moral Perfections; viz. in the Order and good Harmony of the several Faculties of Humane Nature, with respect one to another, and in that Perfection which did Originally belong to each single Faculty; The Image of God, I say in this respect, is miserably defac'd in the Natural Man.

As to the good Harmony of the several Faculties and Powers of Humane Nature, you have already seen how that is spoil'd. And as to the Perfection which should be in every one of these several Faculties, that in an *Unregenerate Man* is very little. Alas in his Understanding, what is there now but Blindness and Darknes? What in his Will, but Stubborness and Perverseness? What in his Affections, but Violence and Disorder? And what in his Lusts and Appetites, but Sensuality and Irregularity? So sadly is the whole Nature of the Unregenerate Man Corrupted, so that little or nothing of the Image of God does now remain in him.

But, Lastly, Above all, Man in his Unregenerate Nature is now miserably Alter'd from what he was; in that all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, instead of Inclining towards, and Centring upon God and Heavenly Things, tend downwards towards the Creature. As to the Appetites and Desires in the Unregenerate, they are in a manner wholly sensual, and are hardly ever to be satisfy'd with what Gratifies the Senses. The Affections also are wholly set upon Worldly Enjoyments, and the Will does also prefer and chuse such far before Spiritual Consolations. And what is more, in the Unregenerate Man, the very *Mind and Conscience is defil'd*, Tit. 1. 15. *And they who are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh*, Rom. 8. 5. *do mind Earthly Things*, Phil. 3. 14. Their whole Thoughts and Contrivances, their Meditations and Purposes are wholly upon those poor and paltry Vanities of this World, and are altogether taken up in making Provisions for the Flesh, and their Hearts and Affections cling

2. The Image of God, wherein he was first Created, defac'd.

Lastly, the Tendency of all the Faculties, both of Soul and Body, are towards the Creature.

closely and solely to the Earth. Hence it is said of such, that *they live after the Flesh*, Rom. 8. 13. and that *they walk after the Flesh*, 2 Pet. 2. 10. they are so wholly Addicted to Fleshly and Worldly Things. And thus you see what is meant by the Flesh.

1. To Renounce the Flesh, is to be renewed in the whole Frame and Constitution of our Nature, after the Image of God.

And now it is time to consider in what sense, and how far we must Renounce the Flesh. And, 1. The Flesh must be Renounc'd by our being Renew'd in the whole Frame and Constitution of our Nature after the Image of God. Thus we are commanded, Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. to put off, concerning the former Conversation, the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and to be Renewed in the Spirit of our Minds; and to put on that New Man, which after God is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness. So that the whole Corrupt Nature must be Restor'd, as near as it can, to its first Constitution, and that Divine Likeness wherewith it was then stamp'd; That is, the Mind, which is now covered with Darknets and Ignorance, must be Enlightned with true and practical Knowledge: *Te have put on the New Man, which is Renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that Created him*, Col. 3. 10. The Will, which is now obstinately bent against the Ways of Righteousness, must be made compliant with God's Will: The Affections, which are now set upon Worldly Things, must be called off from these Earthly Vanities, and fix'd upon Spiritual and Heavenly Objects. And Lastly, the Lusts and Appetites, which in the State of Nature are continually Rebelling against the Mind, must be Reduc'd to their Original Subjection to Right Reason, which is called *Crucifying of the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. and *mortifying our Earthly Members*, Col. 3. 5. Thus must the whole Corrupt Nature be Restor'd, as near as it can, to its first Constitution, and that Divine Likeness wherewith it was at first stamp'd.

The Image of God must be Restor'd as far as it can in this Corrupt State.

Thus, I say, it must be Restor'd, as near as it can; for as long as we are in this Mortal State, some Relicks of Sin and Corruption will still remain within us; so that even in the Regenerate Nature, *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that we cannot do the things that we would*, Gal. 5. 17. That is, we cannot without the Resistance and Opposition of our Fleshly Nature, act in Obedience to the Spiritual and Renewed Nature, so long as we are here on this side the Grave; but the most Holy Persons that are, have their Graces allayed with a mixture of Sin and Corruption. The most Universal Knowledge is not free from Ignorance and Error; the Will, which is most complying with the Commands of God, has sometimes its contrary Velleities, or Wouldings; the Affections which are most Refin'd are sometimes Inordinate and Earthly; so that every Faculty of our Nature, and every Action we do, have some mixture of Sin and Frailty. In a word we cannot attain whilst here on Earth, to these degrees of Perfection wherein we were first Created.

It must be Renew'd to a perfection of Parts, tho not Degrees.

But the Image of God, which is restored to us in our Regeneration, tho' it have not the Perfection of Degrees, yet it must indispensably have the Perfection of parts, as Divines do distinguish; that is, we must have an Universal Inclination to all that is Holy, Just and Good, and an Universal Aversion from all Sin. And we must have our selves actually Adorn'd with all Divine Graces, and Holy Dispositions; and

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we must actually forsake every known Sin: And then tho' something of Humane Frailty will mix it self in the Exercise of all our Vertues, yet through the Mercies of God the Father, in Christ his Son, it will be graciously dispens'd withal: So that thus you see, when the whole Nature of Man in every part and faculty thereof is *Chang'd, Repair'd, and Renew'd*, according to the Happy Constitution and Subordination of the several Faculties, one to another, wherein Man was at first Created; and consequently when the Divine Image which is now defac'd, is in some good measure restor'd; when thus we shall have put on the New Man, Eph. 4. 24. partake of the Divine Nature; 2 Pet. and be conformed to the Image of his Son, Rom. 8. 29 then can we be truly said to Renounce the Flesh.

2. To Renounce the Flesh, is to be Converted in the whole Bent and Inclination of the Soul toward God. This is the true Property of the Regenerate Nature to be exalted above all Worldly Things, and to be carried out in Love and Affection towards God. The Soul, (says a Learned and Pious Author) is a more vigorous and puissant thing when it is once Restor'd to the possession of its own Being, than to be bounded within a narrow Prison of Sensual and Bodily Delights; but it will break forth with the greatest Vehemence, and Ascend upwards towards Immortality. For it is only true Religion that teaches and Enables Men to die to this World, and to all Earthly Things, and to rise above the Sphere of Sensual and Earthly Pleasures, which darken the Mind and blind it that it cannot enjoy the brightness of Divine Light; so that whereas the Fleishly Mind never minds any thing but Flesh, and never rises above the Outward Matter, but always creeps up and down like Shadows upon the Surface of the Earth; and if it begin at any time to make any faint Essays upwards, it presently finds it self laden with a weight of Sensuality, which draws it down again; Holy and Religious Souls being toucht with an Inward Sense of the Divine Goodness and Beauty, are mov'd swiftly after God, and as the Apostle expresses himself, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, they press towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus; that so they may attain to the Resurrection of the Dead.

*To Renounce the Flesh, is to be Converted in the whole Bent and Inclination of the Soul towards God. Smith's Select Discourses, p. 374-430.*

In short therefore, whereas there is now a continual Conflict betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit, the Flesh Lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, we must never cease Mortifying and Subduing all the Motions of Corrupt Nature tending downward towards the Creature, till they be brought in Subjection to the Power and Influence of God's Holy Spirit, which alone can lift up our Hearts and Affections to God and Heavenly Things.

T H E  
XXI. Lecture.

**First, That I should Renounce the Devil, and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this Wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.**

*The sinful Lusts of the Flesh, what.*

**I**N order to the full Explication of these Words, *the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, Having already shew'd you, First, what is meant by *the Flesh*, and in what sense, and how far we must Renounce the *Flesh*.

2. I am now to give you in like manner the full Meaning and Importance of the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, and to shew you in what sense, and how far we are to Renounce them.

And as by the *Flesh* is meant the whole Unregenerate Nature of Man, Soul as well as Body in its State of Corruption, and as it Acts contrary to the Holy Will and Spirit of God; so proportionably by the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, must be understood all the Faculties and Powers of this Corrupted Nature as they carry us out to commit Sin, as well the Faculties of the Soul, the Understanding and Will, as the Bodily Powers; viz. the Affections, Lusts and Appetites.

These are all of 'em in their own Nature, the Effects of God's Workmanship, and were pure as they came forth of his hands: But ever since the Fall of *Adam* they are wofully Corrupted, and there is none of these Faculties or Powers, either of Soul or Body, but may be called a *sinful Lust of the Flesh*. Every Faculty and Power of Soul and Body is properly enough term'd a *Lust*, as it Craves and Desires its Object. And they are all of 'em *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, just as the whole Unregenerate Nature was said to be *Flesh*; that is, either First, as those several Faculties of the Soul do move downwards from God and Heavenly Things, Immediately and Inordinately towards the Creatures: Or Secondly, as the Inferior and Bodily Powers, the Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, do disorderly Rebel against the Superior Faculty of the Understanding and Reason, and do carry the Will into Slavery to 'em. I will take the whole Frame of this our depraved Nature in pieces, that so viewing that Corruption, which residing in every of the Faculties and Powers thereof, renders all of 'em so many *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, we may be better able to Renounce each of those sinful and fleshly Lusts.

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And First, let us consider that Corruption which Resides in the Mind, and renders it Fleshly, and consequently the Motions even of the Intellectual part of our Nature, no better than *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*. And our Understanding, alas, which should be full of Divine Knowledge, such as may be a Lamp unto our Feet, and a Light unto our Paths, is in the Unregenerate Man full of Vanity, Ignorance of, and Prejudice against Divine Truths. The Unregenerate Man neither *understands nor seeks after God*, Rom. 3. 11. *He likes not to Retain God in his Knowledge, or to consider any thing concerning him, but is vain in his Imaginations, having his foolish heart darkned*, Rom. 1. 21, 28. Nay, the best Habits of the Mind in the Unregenerate Man are Corrupt, *having the Understanding darkn'd, being Alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them*, Eph. 4. 18. And hence it comes to pass, that whereas the great and proper Appetite of the Mind is after Knowledge, an Appetite which God hath put into the Soul of Man, and so a thing Beautiful and Good: This very desire of Knowledge becomes a sinful Lust of the Fleshly Mind in several Cases, particularly in these following; viz. when either we misplace our Desires of Knowledge upon wrong Objects, or when we do immoderately study to be exquisitely skill'd in Humane, tho' Lawful Arts and Sciences, to the Neglect and Contempt of Divine Knowledge. And Lastly, when out of Pride, Prejudice, and contradiction to all sacred Truths, we set up our own Fleshly Imaginations and Reasonings against the Spiritual Notions that are dictated to us. And accordingly such our Appetites or Desires, even of Knowledge it self, must be Renounced, as so many sinful Lusts of a Fleshly Mind.

And first we must Renounce the Desires of Knowing wrong Objects; that is, we must not Gratifie, but Mortifie our Desires of Knowing such Things, which are either *Hurtful to be known*, or are not proper for Man to know. Now as to this we are to consider, that there is a certain Distemper of Mind, called Curiosity, which as it is of like Nature, so it is of full as hurtful and Mischievous Effects to the Mind, as that Distemper is to the Body, which stirs up Persons to eat Chalk, or Coals, or Trash, or whatever affords either none at all, or a very ill Nourishment: Such is the Curiosity of Knowing Evil, which was the thing that ruin'd our first Parents, and afterwards Solomon, and since him, many other Persons: Such are they who have a great Desire to taste those Pleasures which are in Sin, and by Tasting of 'em their Minds are defil'd, and their Morals Corrupted, and it is seldom that they do ever after return to have a right Judgment of Good or Evil. Thus hurtful is the Knowledge of some things, so that it is much better to be Ignorant thereof, than to know 'em.

Again there are others, whose Curiosity gives 'em a strange Itch to know Hidden Things, such as are not proper for Man to know, as the Decrees of Predestination, and the Counsels of God's Will, which is the Ark that no Mortal Eye ought to look into. And many are wonderfully Inquisitive to learn the Future Events of Kingdoms and States, and of their own and others private Fortunes. And therefore it is, that they are so apt to give heed to every pretended Prophecy; and tho' few are so very wicked, as to Consult Evil Spirits themselves by Magical Arts, yet Multitudes will make no scruple to Resort to Fortune-tellers and Conjurers; and those that do consult 'em, or are reputed



to do, tho' it be an Impiety so severely threatned, *Deut. 18. 11, 12.* But all Curious Enquiries whatever into the Secrets of God's Providence are to be Renounc'd by us Christians, as being the Gratifications only of a sinful Curiosity. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are Reveal'd, unto us and our Children for ever, that we may do all the words of his Law, Deut. 29. 29.*

2. When we do immoderately study to be Exquisitely Skill'd in whatever Humane Arts and Sciences, to the Neglect or Contempt of Divine Knowledge.

2. We must Renounce that as a sinful Lust of the Fleahly Mind, which improporcionably to the true worth of things, is more desirous to furnish it self with the Knowledge of what concerns only this Mortal Life, than with the Knowledge of those Divine Truths, which direct us to Life Everlasting. Now *this is Life Eternal*, or that Knowledge which leadeth and directs us to Life Eternal, *That we know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, Joh. 17. 3.* But alas, such is the Folly of the Carnally and Worldly wise, that most Persons do neglect the Knowledge of God, and the Christian Religion, as if it were little worth, when certainly in the end there is nothing will stand us in that stead as this sort of Knowledge. Some there are whose whole search is for the Causes and Cures of Bodily Distempers, and yet alas all is but Guess and Conjecture, and an ordinary Malady, not very seldom, baffles the most Learned Physician, and he sits down heavy in Disgrace and Disappointment. But the Knowledge of God and Religion, if duly apply'd, never fails to Cure the Soul of all its Infirmities, nor will it fail to fill the Mind with the Sweetest Comforts and Satisfaction. Others you shall have who desire and care for nothing more than good Skill in the Laws of their Countrey, whereby they may raise themselves good Estates in this World; but alas, such Knowledge can only serve a present Interest; but by the Knowledge of our Christianity we may be able to *provide our selves Bags that wax not old, Eternal in the Heavens.* Some are wholly bent upon Merchandize and Trade, but when the most Skilful Pilot shall split upon the Rocks, or be foundred in the Sands, he who has Heaven in his Eye may steer his Course without danger through the roughest Billows of Adverse Fortune. And others there are who seem to aim at no higher Knowledge, than how to Till their Land, and feed their Cattle, and when after all the Crop fails the most painful Husbandman, he who knows the Laws of Christianity need not fear a joyful and a plentiful Harvest; so excellent and useful is Divine Knowledge above all other Arts and Sciences. Not that I would cast a Disparagement upon them; they are the Gift of God, and useful in their kind; but the Knowledge of our Christian Religion, as it serves to nobler and better Purposes, so ought it to be prefer'd to any other, and most study'd by every Christian. And hence therefore does *St. Paul*, when he comes at any time to speak of Divine Knowledge, not only barely enjoin the Attainment of it, as of other Vertues, but does moreover add Prayers and Supplications to God to endow 'em therewith, and to increase 'em therein. *We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the Knowledge of his Will in all Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord in all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the Knowledge of God, Col. 1. 9, 10.* And again, *I cease not, says he, making mention of you always in my Prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*

The Knowledge of our Christian Religion, as it serves to nobler Purposes, so ought it to be prefer'd to any other.

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tion in the Knowledge of him, Eph. i. 16, 17. So that tho' to be excellently well skill'd in any Art or Science whatsoever, which terminates only in the Conveniencies of this Life, be not only Lawful, but Commendable, yet it is a Profaneness fit to be Renounc'd by every Christian, to prefer such to Divine Knowledge, and to apply your Mind wholly to the attaining of such Skill, to the Neglect of those Great and Important Truths, the Knowledge of which is indispensably necessary to our Everlasting Happiness. And therefore let your Profession and Calling be what it will, you must make it your first Care and Study to know the Nature and Design of the Christian Religion, how that it is a Body of the most Excellent Principles and Laws, all of 'em tending wholly to render you Holy and Good Livers, and then to make you to depend upon the Mediation of Christ with his Father, for his Acceptance thereof to your Justification. You must also next make it more your Study to understand thoroughly the Covenant of Grace, than the Nature and Obligation of any Humane Covenants or Contracts, whatsoever. And since we must build our hopes upon the performance of particular Articles, and as exactly as possible square our Lives according to each single Condition of the Covenant of Grace, there can be nothing of more concernment to every Christian, Lay as well as Clergy, than thoroughly to understand, both the Meaning and Importance of every Doctrine of Faith, and the Nature and Extent of every Christian Duty. And lastly, Since a good End can never be obtain'd without the Knowledge and Use of due and proper means, the Nature therefore and Use of Prayer, and the Nature and End of Sacraments must be a most necessary part of Christian Knowledge. So much must our Appetites after Knowledge in the most Excellent of Humane Arts and Science be Renounc'd, in comparison of our Desires after a competent Measure of Divine Knowledge.

*The Necessary Points of Christian Knowledge.*

But Lastly, above all we must Renounce that prevailing Appetite in such as are of most Depraved and Corrupt Minds, viz. *The setting up their own Imaginations and Fleshly Reasonings against those Spiritual Notions, and those more Mysterious Articles of Faith, which are delivered to us in the Scripture.* In the more depraved Nature of some Men, there is a great deal of Untowardness and Difficulty to submit to the Sacred Truths Revealed to us by Christ in the Gospel; as to Matters of Faith, or such Articles as are necessary to be believ'd, one that is conceited of his own Wisdom, strength of Parts, or Improvement in Knowledge, will not submit his Reason to entertain Notions which he cannot Comprehend and Penetrate. *The Carnal Mind which is Enmity against God,* Rom. 8. 7. will disdain to have his Understanding baffl'd or puzzl'd with Sublime Mysteries of Faith, he will quarrel at any thing too high for his Wit to reach, or too Knotty for him to unloose. How can these things be? What Reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true. This Point is not intelligible; And perhaps he finds fault with the whole Body of the Scriptures, either because some things are obscure to him, or the Phrase is not quaint and fine enough. Thus the Carnal Mind treateth the Distates of Faith, and the Word of God.

*3. When out of Pride, Prejudice, and Contradiction to all Sacred Truths, we set up our own Carnal Imaginations, and Fleshly Reasonings against those Spiritual Notions, and those Mysterious Articles of our Faith, which are deliver'd to us in Scripture.*

But far be it from Christians thus to indulge their own Carnal Reasonings, and Self-Conceits, in opposition to what God has Reveal'd to us, as necessary to be Believ'd by us. For certainly the Infinite Wis-

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doim both knows what is fittest to be taught and reveal'd to us, and in what Manner and Method he had best to express himself. Those that did thus proudly despise the Wisdom of God, measuring it according to their own Talent of Wit and Understanding, did at first, and do to this Day most fatally miscarry; for it is written, 1 Cor. 1. 19. *I will destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and will bring to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent.* But our Duty is to submit our Understandings to Almighty God to be Inlightn'd by his Infinite Wisdom, *Casting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ,* 2 Cor. 10. 5. There is a great deal of Vertue and Grace in an Obedient Understanding, and therefore to the Disciples who were so dispos'd, *To them it was given* as our Saviour tells us, Matth. 13. 11. *To understand the Myseries of the Kingdom of Heaven; but to them who are not prepar'd with an humble Mind, it is not given.*

Nor is this an hard Imposition upon Mankind, to oblige 'em to believe what is above our Reason to Comprehend. It is sufficient that the Holy Scriptures which do deliver such Articles of Faith, as necessary to be Believ'd, are sufficiently witnessed to be Divine Revelations; and that there is nothing contain'd in the Articles or Myseries themselves, which is contrary or contradictory to that Reason which God has given to Man. But that there should be any thing in an Article of Faith, which, though it be above our Reason to Comprehend, (especially in this its State of weakness) must yet be Believ'd, will not seem hard, if we consider, that there are many Appearances, even in Nature it self, which no Man has been yet found who could give a tolerable account for; and yet the truth of their being so and so, cannot be call'd in question.

*This Humour of opposing Reason to Revelation proceeds from mere Pride.*

In short, this Humour of opposing our own Fleshly Reasonings against those Divine Revelations which we cannot now in this State of Imperfection, so fully Comprehend, proceeds meerly from the Pride of those Men, who disdaining to own the Decays of our Reason, as well as of other the Powers of the Soul, ever since the Fall, (which every Modest Man's Experience does make him too sensible of in a thousand Instances) do over-value their Talent of Wit, far beyond what they ought: And this therefore being such a proud *Luciferian Temper*, it ought to be *Renounc'd*, as the most Impious of all the *Sinful Lusts of the Fleshly Mind*. And let this suffice to be spoke concerning our Renouncing of the Sinful Lusts of that sort.

*The Corrupt Will, what and how to be Renounc'd.*

2. *Let us next consider the WILL, and the Innate Corruption which Residing in that Faculty renders it Fleshly, and tending in all its Choices towards the Creature, and so the proper Matter of the Christians Renuntiation.* And as to this Faculty we are to consider, how that " God gave to Man a Righteous Law, which was to be the Rule of " his Will; and while it was conformable to this, it was conformable to the Will of God, and consequently beautiful and " regular; but instead thereof, there is now a *Law of Sin and " Death*, Rom. 8. 2. And this Law subdues the Law of the " Mind, and brings the Soul *into Captivity to the Law of Sin*, Rom. " 7. 23. And the Will being thus Captivated, is made Carnal, and " filled with Enmity against God, and that Law which he once plant- " ed



“ ed in us to be the Rule of our Will ; ſo that it is not *ſubject to the Law of God ; neither indeed can be*, whilſt we remain unregenerate; “ *Rom. 8. 7.* But in its corrupt State being always Averse to the Directions of God’s Laws and Right Reason, it perversly chuſes thoſe things which pleaſe only the Senses, and ſo becomes, in the moſt proper and immediate Senſe of the Word, a Sinful and *Fleſhly Luſt*.

But as obſtinately bent, as the Corrupt Will is found to be, againſt complying with the Laws of God, which would guide our Souls upwards, we muſt bring our ſelves to that Habit of Self-denial, ſo as readily to ſubmit our Wills to God’s Laws, to be Govern’d by ‘em ; the reaſon is, we are not our own, and therefore our own depraved Wills ought not to bear Rule in us, but we are God’s Creatures, and his Subjects and Servants, and therefore his All-wise Will and Pleaſure ſhould be the Rule and Meaſure of, and preſide over all our Actions. And this it muſt do in the moſt difficult Caſes, when his Laws ſeem moſt to thwart our Reaſon, and his Diſpenſations ſeem moſt hard and ſevere. Thus did *Abraham the Father of the Faithful*, when God commanded him even to ſlay his only Son *Iſaac*, he readily obey’d, he did not ſtand to diſpute the caſe, *Gen. 22. 10.* And thus did *Job* in reference to the Diſpenſations of God’s Providence, when he was ſtrip’d naked of his vaſt Poſſeſſions, and even of his dear Children ; he even then bleſt God for it, (killing as it were the Rod that ſtroke him.) *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job 1. 21.*

III. *The Affections in the Carnal Man do ſadly degenerate into what may too properly be call’d the ſinful Luſts of the Fleſh.* Our Paſſions and Affections are indeed in themſelves of ſingular uſe to the perfecting of our Natures. They are the Wings of the Soul to carry it ſorth with eagerneſs in the purſuit of that which is good, and with Averſation and Flight from that which is Evil. They are variously numbred up, but the Maſter Affections are *Love* and *Hatred*, which when they are rightly govern’d, all the reſt are ſo too ; but when they are miſplac’d and out of order, ſo in the ſame proportion are all the others. And accordingly, whereas then it is, that our Love is rightly fix’d ; 1. *When we place it upon a proper Object* : And, 2. *When we ſteer towards the Thing we Love, with Deſires proportionable to the Good that is in the Object*, that is, “ *When the beſt and greateſt Things are purſu’d with our Chiefeſt Paſſions, middle Things with a leſs, and the loweſt with the leaſt* ; So it is, that ſo long as a Perſon remains Unregenerate, he either firſt places his Love upon that which he ſhould Hate, which is the wrong Object, as upon ſinful Profits and Pleaſures ; or ſecondly he loves Things of an Indifferent Nature, ſuch as are Earthly Things, with an over Intenſe Affection, beyond their true Worth and Value. And ſo on the contrary, as to Hatred, the Carnal Mind hates that which he ſhould love, *Viz. God and Vertue, The Carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God, nor is it Subject to the Law of God, Rom. 8. 7.* Or elſe he hates ſome Things as the chiefeſt of all Evils, *viz. Sufferings and Afflictions*, when indeed they are of that Nature, that upon due Conſideration a Man ſhall be able to ſay, *That it is good for him, that he has been Afflicted.* And accordingly when our Affections of either kind, are either miſplac’d upon wrong Objects, or are diſproportionate to

3. *The Affections, what, and how to be Renounc’d.*

the true worth and Evil that is in those Objects, towards which it is lawful to be well or evilly Affected in Moderate Degrees. In either of these cases, I say, our Affections shall become Sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and are necessary to be Renounced by us.

1. As they are Misplac'd upon wrong Objects.

And 1. Those Affections of Love and Hatred must be utterly Renounc'd, which we shall find our selves to have misplac'd upon wrong Objects; that is, instead of Loving, we must utterly Hate and Abhor all Sin and Sinful Pleasures: So the Psalmist, Psal. 97.10. *Te that Love the Lord, hate Evil.* Now Sin is the greatest Evil in the World, as being most directly contrary to the Holy Nature and Will of God; and it is the Cause of all the Evils which befall us, and therefore to take pleasure in Sin is so perverse a thing, that so long as any Person remains thus wickedly Dispos'd, he is an Enemy of God, and no better than a Child of the Devil, 1 John 3. 10. Thus must we not misplace our Love upon that greatest of all Evils, which is Sin.

And so 2. Instead of Hating God and Virtue, against whom the Carnal and Unregenerate are at Enmity, we must Entirely and Affectionately Love both, which is so plain and palpable a Truth, as needs neither proof nor Enlargement. And thus we are to Renounce the Affections of Love and Hatred, whenever they are misplac'd upon undue Objects.

2. As they are Disproportionate to the Love, Worth, and Evil that is in those Objects, towards which it is lawful to be well or evilly Affected in Moderate Degrees.

2. And we must so far Renounce 'em, as they are Disproportionate to the true Worth and Evil that is in those Objects, towards which it is lawful to be well or Evilly Affected in Moderate Degrees. That is,

1st. We must not Love God with an Inferiour Degree of Affection, and Worldly Things with a Superior; but as God is the Supreme Good in himself, and the Author of all the Good we Enjoy, we must therefore Love him accordingly with the Intensest Degree of Affection that we shall be able; so Matth. 22. 37. *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.* We must so Love him, as chearfully to Renounce and Sacrifice all our Profits and Pleasures when call'd thereto; that is, *We must deny our selves, take up our Cross and follow him in Afflictions, Distresses, and Persecutions, whenever the Cross shall be laid upon us, Matth. 18. 24.* Nay, and we must so Love him, as even to Hate all others, the Nearest and Dearest Relations in comparison of him, Luk. 14. 26. So far must we Renounce our Affections of Love, as it is any wise disproportionate to the thing Beloved, as it is too violently set upon perishing and worldly Goods, and too cold towards God and Heavenly Things.

2. And on the contrary we must also Renounce that other Affection of Hatred, as it is Disproportionate to the Evil, which is to be Hated. There may be just occasion of Anger towards a Person, and of Hatred of his ways, but we must not let those Passions so far exceed their due Bounds, as to Degenerate into Wrath and Malice. *Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour be put away from you with all Malice; And be ye Kind one to another, Tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Eph. 4. 31, 32.*

3. The Lusts and Appetites are such Sinful Lusts of the Flesh as are to be Renounc'd.

3. The Last of those Powers of our Corrupted Nature, which are here to be Renounced, are our Lusts and Appetites, which in a State of Unregeneracy are indeed most directly and immediately no other than

so

so many Sinful Lusts of the Flesh. These were designed by the God of Nature for our Preservation. Our Appetites after Meat and Drink were Implanted in our Nature in order to preserve our own selves in Being; and Cupidity or Lust for the Propagation and Preservation of a Posterity to succeed us. But when either our Appetites or Lusts do desire, 1. *Undue Objects*: Or, 2. That which in it self is Lawful and Allowable, in *Undue Measures*, they do then degenerate into *Sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, and must be Renounced by us.

And 1<sup>st</sup>. As to the Indulgence of a Fleshly Appetite with such Meats and Drinks, as are Unlawful in respect of their Quality; It does infinitely become Christians utterly to Renounce that Sinful Epicurism which seems to study nothing so much, as by new invented Dishes to *fair deliciously every Day*. Christians should relish better things than these, and are not therefore thus *to make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14.

Nor Secondly, Must we Christians gratifie the Cravings of our Appetites in Eating and Drinking, but we must indeed *take heed to our selves, lest at any time our Hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and Drunkenness, and so the Day come upon us unawares*, Luke 21. 34. But above all,

Lastly, It behoves Christians to Renounce those which are peculiarly call'd the Lusts of the Flesh, whether it be, 1. The Lusting after strange Women, the *Neighing after the Neighbour's Wife*, as the Prophet expresses it: Or, 2. Even that Immoderation practis'd by many in the Married State, there being a Chastity and Modesty which ought to be preserv'd, even in Wedlock it self, which the Carnal part of Mankind may perhaps but little think of.

And indeed this Renouncing of these Fleshly *Lusts of Concupiscence*, is perhaps what the Composers of our Catechism (as taking the Form of Renuntiation from the Ancient Baptismal Vow) did particularly intend; for as the Gentiles did scarcely make any account of Fornication, nor think it an Irregularity and Vice, so the Scripture, and the first Christians, did particularly lay it upon all that should take upon 'em the Christian Name and Profession, to Renounce those kind of Sinful Lusts. *But Fornication and all Uncleanness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh Saints; for this know you, that no Whoremonger, nor Unclean Person hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God*, Eph. 5. 4, 5. And thus I have fully considered these several Faculties and Powers both of Soul and Body, as they are so many Sinful Lusts of the Flesh moving downwards from God and Heavenly Things, Immoderately towards the Creature.

II. And now I come to consider some of 'em, viz. The Affections, Lusts, and Appetites, as so many Sinful Lusts of the Flesh, under another Notion, and that is, as they do disorderly Rebel against the Superior Faculty of the Understanding and Reason, and do carry the Will into Slavery to 'em; and to shew how they must be Renounc'd upon that account also. What the Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature originally was, and how it is now broken, I have already shew'd you, as also how that instead of the Harmonious Subordination of the Inferiour Faculties, to the Superiour, that the Affections, Lust and Appetites do absolutely Reign, and that Reason and Conscience are in the Unregenerate drag'd into miserable Slavery.

1. As they do desire Undue Objects.

2. As they desire 'em in Immoderate Measures.

Lastly, the Inferiour and Bodily Powers, viz. The Affections, Lusts, and Appetites to be Renounc'd, as they Rebel against Right Reason.

And



*The Business  
of Religion is  
to Reduce  
Man, as near  
as possible, to  
his primitive  
State of Inno-  
cence and In-  
tegrity.*

And now I am only to shew you, that it is the proper Business and Employment of Religion, to Reduce Man, as far as is possible, in this State of Weakness and Infirmary, to his Primitive State of Innocence and Integrity, to rescue him out of Slavery, to restore him to himself, to put Right Reason and Religion again into the Throne, and to subject his Affections and Passions, his Lusts and Appetites, and every Inordinate Inclination within him, to the Dictates and Laws thereof, refusing to Gratifie any of those in any thing that is Sinful and Unlawful.

This is to wrestle against Flesh and Blood: And thus we must wrestle, till we overcome, and bring it under, into an Entire Subjection to Right Reason, as ever we expect to be Friends of God, or ever hope to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. There is nothing more plain in Scripture, than the utter Inconsistency of a Carnal Temper and Disposition to a State of Grace and Reconciliation with God. *The Carnal Mind is Enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; so that to be carnally minded is Death, but to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace*, Rom. 8. 6, 7. and therefore let me add with the same Apostle, Ver. 12, 13, 14. *Brethren we are Debtors, not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh; for if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, and so Heirs of Eternal Life; so necessary it is, as ever we expect the Favour of God, and future Happiness, to subdue the Flesh, and all its Lusts and Appetites, its Passions and Affections, all our fond and foolish Imaginations, and false Prejudices, and whatever else within us which favours of Carnality, to the Power and Conduct of Right Reason, enlightened by the Word and Spirit of God.*

*To this pur-  
pose of keep-  
ing under our  
Fleshly Lusts,  
it was that our  
Reason was gi-  
ven us.*

And to this purpose it is, that our Reason was given us. That Excellent and Divine Faculty was not certainly bestowed upon us, to such Vile and Base Purposes, as to purvey for a filthy Carcass, which shall consume ere long in Stench and Rottenness; but to nobler and better Purposes you may be sure, *viz.* to Govern and Manage the Animal part of us, our Flesh, and to render it serviceable and useful to Reason and Religion. The best Philosophers amongst the Heathens, the *Platonists*, do call the Mind, that Divine part of us, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, *The Charioteer*, and compare it to a Rider, and the Body, or Flesh, and all its Troop of Affections or Passions, of Lusts and Appetites, they compare to so many rude and wild Horses, that must be Manag'd and Tam'd, and kept in good order, and render'd Serviceable and Useful to the Mind and Reason.

Now so it is, as a well-order'd and Manag'd Horse may sometimes stumble, and start aside, tho his Rider keep a very strait Rein, and a weary hand upon him; So in this corrupt and depraved State of our Natures, our Fleshly Lusts will sometimes at leastwise, even in the most Regenerate, have some small tendencies, some Imperfect Velleities, and Wouldings towards Evil Things. But if we shall take due care to keep so watchful an Eye, and wary an Hand over 'em, as presently, so soon as we perceive any Evil Motion and Tendency, to curb and restrain it, and not willingly, nor wilfully to indulge any Evil Inclination,

clination, we ſhall by the Gracious Acceptance and Favour of God be accounted good Managers of that hard Province, the Renouncing or *Subduing of our Fleſhly Luſts*. If in the general courſe of our Lives, we act like Men endowed with Reaſon and Grace, we ſhall be pardon'd all our Unwilling and Unavoidable Infirmities.

III. And Laſtly, I ſhall have done this point when I have ſhew'd you, what is meant by Renouncing *ALL the ſinful Luſts of the Fleſh*, and in what ſenſe, and how far we muſt Renounce 'em *ALL*. And by Renouncing *ALL* the Sinful Luſts of the Fleſh, can be underſtood no leſs, than that we muſt Indulge no part, nor Faculty of our Corrupt Nature in the Tranſgreſſion of any of God's Commandments. All Men are not alike Addicted to Sin; but according as their Temper and Inclinations do differ, accordingly are they more or leſs given, ſome to one Vice, ſome to another. Thus ſome are Naturally High-minded, and theſe diſdaining to Think in the common Road, or to ſubmit their Judgments to commonly receiv'd Opinions, are always ſtarting new Notions, and broaching New *Hereſies*. Some again will be Orthodox enough in their Opinions; but being Perſons of warm Conſtitutions, and Sanguine Complexions, they cannot help it they'll ſay, their being overcome by the Pleaſures of Senſe. The whole Herd of Unregenerate Sinners are not made up of ſuch as are all over wicked. But ſome are more particularly in their own Nature addicted to be Covetous, ſome to Revenge, and others to Luſt, and the like. And then when theſe their Natural Diſpoſitions are ſtrengthen'd (as is uſual) by long Accuſtom'd Habits of Indulgence to ſome ſuch Complexional Vices; it becomes a very difficult Work utterly to Renounce ſuch Sinful Luſts of the Fleſh.

But however difficult it is, there muſt be no Indulgence to any one Fleſhly Luſt, nor muſt there be any Vitious Inclination ſuffer'd to Reign in us; for the *Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men*, Rom. i. 18. And whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, ſays St. James, and yet offend in one point, that is, ſhall allow himſelf in the Indulgence of any one Sinful Luſt, he is guilty of all, James 2. 10. ſhall be as ſurely puniſh'd, as he who had liv'd in a breach of all.

And indeed our Buſineſs is particularly to ſet our ſelves in oppoſition to thoſe Luſts, which ariſe from our particular Temper and Conſtitution, and to ſubdue them; And alſo to break off thoſe Habits whereby theſe Natural Inclinations and proneneſs to ſome particular Sins have grown ſtrong upon us. And this is that which is called, *Matth. 5. 29, 30. A Cutting off the Right Hand, and a plucking out of the Right Eye*; which Divorcing of our ſelves from our beloved Luſts, becauſe it is ſo difficult to go about, and ſo few have the Courage to do it effectually; it is therefore ſaid, That the Gate of Heaven is ſtrait, and that many of thoſe who ſhall ſeek to enter in, ſhall not be able, Luke 13. 24.

Now this is hard Doctrine to the Carnal Man, who is wedded to his Luſts, and has no mind to part with 'em. Such therefore are for finding out all the Eviſions poſſible to ſhift off the neceſſity of ſuch a ſorrowful Separation, as dreadful almoſt to 'em, as that of Soul and Body. And becauſe they find St. Paul himſelf, (a Regenerate Perſon no doubt) owning that he found a Law, that when he would do good,

3. To Renounce ALL the Sinful Luſts of the Fleſh, what.

There muſt be no one Fleſhly Luſt ſuffer'd to Reign in us.

Our buſineſs is particularly to oppoſe Luſts of Temper and Conſtitution.

This becauſe it is a hard Doctrine to the Carnal Man, is much needed.

evil was present with him, and that he delighted in the Law of God after the Inward Man; but that he saw another Law in his Members, warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin which was in his Members; so that with the Mind he did serve the Law of God, but with the Flesh the Law of Sin; Rom. 7. 21, 22, 23, 25. Because, I say, they find even St. Paul expressing himself, as they think, as unable to Resist the Temptations of Fleshly Lusts; and that all that he was able to do, was in his Mind and Conscience to disapprove of that which the prevailing power of Lust within him, forc'd him to commit; They do therefore conclude, that provided it be with *Reluctance*, and some Counter-Strivings against their Lusts, that they do yield thereto; that they are in a Regenerate State, however, tho in the Issue they do comply therewith; and consequently that it is not of such necessity to Renounce *ALL*, but that the Inferior Appetites may be Indulg'd, what the Mind and Reason do squeamishly Refuse.

The Objection  
from Rom. 7.  
cleared.

But that you may not make Shipwrack of a good Conscience, by falling into the usual Mistakes about the sense of this place, you are to know, that St. Paul's design in this 7th to the Romans being to Represent the Ill Condition of the Jews, as under the Law of Moses, which only Enlightn'd their Minds so far as to Convince 'em of many things to be Sins, which otherwise they could not have known to be such; but gave no power to 'em to overcome those Lusts; because the Jews could not bear such a Charge against themselves and their Law, he does suppose himself in the case of a mere Jew, and personating such a one, does accordingly argue as from experience, against the Converting power of the mere Law of Moses, which was destitute of those Assistances afforded in the Gospel. And this is a Scheme and Figure of Speech usual with this Apostle in many other places. Thus for their sakes he did transfer in a Figure those things to himself, which could not be personally spoken of him, 1 Cor. 4. 6. And nothing is more usual than the same way of speaking amongst Men, especially in Reproofs and such cases, as would be ill Refuted, to be downright charg'd withal; but when we say, *We do so, and so*, under this disguise it is usual with more Success, and less Offence, to Disparage and Correct very Ill Practices.

But that St. Paul should speak it of himself, when he tells 'em, That he saw another Law in his Members, warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which was in his Members; and that with the Mind he did serve the Law of God, but with the Flesh, the Law of Sin, is contrary both to what he affirms elsewhere of himself, and of those who are truly Regenerate. For of himself he affirms, Rom. 8. 2. That the Law of the Spirit of Life, had made him free from the Law of Sin and Death. And Ver. 1. he says of those who are in Christ Jesus, and to whom Condemnation does not belong, and who are consequently Regenerate, that they walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. And Gal. 5. 24. it is said, that they who are Christs, have Crucify'd the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts.

We must Renounce the  
Flesh, and all  
its Sinful  
Lusts, so as to  
have an Aversion,  
an Antipathy in our  
hearts thereunto.

In short therefore, and to draw towards a Conclusion, we must not content our selves in this great Work of Renouncing *ALL* the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, that we have our Minds enlightened, so as to know



know what we ought to do, whilst our Affections and bodily Powers do remain Rebellious against the Dictates of our Minds and Consciences. But we must have our whole Natures possess'd with an Aversion, an Antipathy from the very Heart, against all Sin; and we must have both the Mind, Will and Affections, nay, the very Lusts and Appetites fully bent against it. And we must have, on the contrary, a hearty Love and Disposition to all Vertue, wrought in all the same Faculties both of Soul and Body. VVe must be *Renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and put on the New Man, which after God is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Eph. 4. 23, 24.

And when a Person is thus inwardly Chang'd throughout, in all the Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body, it is then only that he can be truly said to be a *New Creature, a New Man*.

And this, indeed, to become thus Renew'd in the Spirit of our Minds, so as to have the Heart and Affections set against Sin and sinful Pleasures, as well as the Mind Convinc'd of the Evil of 'em, is the hard Work. This is certain, that it is not possible for any Man to work so great a Change in his Nature, of himself, but it is the Spirit of God that must Assist wonderfully in the doing of it. And, indeed,

That we may be said sincerely and throughly to *Renounce the Flesh, and ALL its sinful Lusts*; that Renovation of our Corrupted Nature, wherein this Renuntiation does consist, must be such as is wrought in us by the Spirit and Grace of God. This I say, because it is very possible for a Man to be Chang'd from some sensual Courses to an utter hatred thereof, and yet remain in God's Eyes a *Carnal and Unregenerate Man*; and the reason is, because his Change proceeds not from any Inward Vital Principle of Vertue, but from some prudential Methods in the management of his Pleasures, as some the most sensual Epicures, that live, shall become at length temperate and sober, because their Constitutions will not bear a Debauch; but as the Spirit of God had nothing to do in the Change, so in their Hearts and Minds they remain still to be sensual. And others again you shall meet, who have a full Conviction in their Minds and Consciences, through the preaching of the Word, of the Evil of Sin, and yet in their Affections they Love it, and their Lusts and Appetites Rebelling against the Reason of their Mind, will have it, and their Wills do finally chuse it; so that these Persons *with the Mind do serve the Law of God, but with the Flesh the Law of Sin*; as St. Paul, in that much mistaken Chapter, Rom. 7. 25. does represent, (as was now shew'd you) the Case of the Carnal Jew, abiding only under the Conviction of the Law. But where the Spirit of God works the Change, that Person is *Sanctify'd wholly, and the whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body will be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thes. 5. 23. So that such a Person shall effectually Renounce the Flesh, and All its sinful Lusts, both of the Inward, and of the Outward Man.

And accordingly, as we will draw nigh to God, and have him draw nigh to us, we must cleanse our hands, and purifie our hearts, and not be double-minded, James 4. 8. We must, through the help of his Grace, *Cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of*  
Flesh

*Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God, 2 Cor. 7. 1.* We must be always, I say, in the perfecting of (one degree after another) our Holiness, and that Image of God which we lost by our Fall; for the subduing of All our Lusts, must be the Work of Time; and it is not of a sudden, that we can get an intire Conquest over 'em ALL. But if in our Strivings against 'em, we find our selves still more and more to get ground upon 'em, we are in a hopeful Condition. In a Word therefore, *Brethren, we are Debtors, not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh; for if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if through the Spirit ye do Mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, Rom. 12. 13, 14.*

*The Reason of having enlarg'd so much upon this one Article of Renouncing the Devil, &c.*

And so I have at length done with this no less Important, than Copious Subject, the *Renouncing of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.* It may seem indeed, as if I have been too long upon the Explication of one single Article of our Covenant, *viz. the Renouncing of the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and All the Sinful Lusts of the Flesh.* But if it be considered, that half the Business of our Christian Religion is performed in Resisting the Enemies of our Salvation, it will not be a Matter of blame that I have been so long upon this Point, especially in Instructing of Youth about it, who ought to be very well fore-arm'd in order to their coming off Conquerors. The truth of it is, this Renouncing of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; that is, the Resisting, and Overcoming of all their Numerous Host of Temptations, is the Christian's Warfare and great Work. For as the Holy Scriptures do in a multitude of Texts Represent our State as a State of Warfare. (*Fight the good Fight of Faith, lay hold on Eternal Life; for hereunto ye have been called before many Witnesses, 1 Tim. 6. 12.* That is, we Lifted our selves in this Warfare at our Baptism, in the Presence of the Church of Christ) As our State, I say, is a State of Warfare against all these Spiritual Enemies; so it does infinitely concern all of us to know, as far as is possible, All their Arts and Stratagems to deceive us; and this, I hope, will be a sufficient Apology, that I have been so improporcionably long, to what I have, and shall be upon other Heads, in shewing you what it is, and how far you must Renounce the *Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanity of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.*

THE

## T H E XXII. Lecture.

**Secondly, That I should Believe all the Articles  
of the Christian Faith.**

**H**AVING largely Explain'd the first Condition of Life and Happiness, and shew'd you, what I conceive is meant by *Renouncing the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vnities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*; I come now to do the like, as to the Second Condition upon which we are to expect to be Justify'd, to have our Sins Pardon'd, and eternal Life and Happiness conferr'd upon us; and which we have also Covenanted with God to do, and that is, that we *Believe all the Articles of our Christian Faith*. In order to the Explication of which Point,

1. *I will declare to you the General Nature of those ARTICLES, or Christian Truths, which are to be believed.*

2. *I will shew you, What it is to BELIEVE those Articles, or Christian Truths, so as to make us capable of Life and Happiness.*  
And,

3. *I will shew you how we must Believe ALL the Articles of the Christian Faith.*

And that I am to declare to you something in general, concerning the Nature of those ARTICLES, or Christian Truths, which are to be Believed.

The whole Bible, both Old and New Testament, is the proper Object of a Christians Faith; and whatever we find therein Recorded, or deliver'd down to us, we are to believe, as a Divine, Certain, and Infallible Truth, because all things therein contain'd, are the Word of him who will not, who cannot Lie, who neither can be deceiv'd himself, nor will he deceive others.

As to the Old Testament and the Writings of the Prophets, *Jehoshaphat*, in a Solemn Assembly of the whole People, upon a Solemn Fast-day, *2 Chron. 20. 20.* Proclaimed unto them, *stood up and said, Hear me O Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be Establish'd; believe his Prophets, so shall ye Prosper.* And let the Declarations of God Recorded therein be of what Nature they will, the Truth of them is by no means to be called in doubt; *If you will not Believe, surely ye shall not be Establish'd, Isa.*

7. 9. And so likewise as to the New Testament; Our Saviour upon his entrance to preach the Gospel, did in the first place require of all Men



to Believe it. *Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; Repent ye and Believe the Gospel, Mark 1. 14, 15.* And when he was also leaving the World, and Commission'd his Disciples to go into all the World, and to preach the Gospel to every Creature, He declar'd, that *he that Believeth shall be Saved, but he that Believeth not shall be Damn'd, Mark 16. 15, 16.* So that both the Old and New Testament, and every part and parcel of Scripture therein contain'd, is firmly to be Believ'd, as the Divine, Certain, and Infallible Truth of God.

And the reason thereof, as to the Old Testament, is *because Prophecy came not in Old time by the Will of Man; but Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 21.* And we are also firmly to Believe all the parts both of Old and New indifferently, because *all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works, 2 Tim. 3. 16.* All the parts of it are the Dictates and Word of God himself, and are more or less Useful to our Edification and Improvement in Divine Knowledge, Faith, and Practice. And therefore all Ranks and Degrees of Men, and of every Age, Young as well as Old, ought diligently to Study, and firmly to Believe the Holy Scriptures. The Bereans did so, and they were accounted the more Honourable for so doing. The Bereans were more Noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they Received, or Believed the Word with all readiness of Mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, Act. 17. 11. And it is Recorded to the Immortal Honour of Timothy, 2 Ep. 3. 15. that from a Child he had known the Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus.

*Some Truths  
Revealed in  
Scripture of  
greater Im-  
portance and  
Concernment  
to us, than  
others.*

Well, but tho' all Scripture, as being the Infallible Word of him, who neither can be deceived himself, nor will deceive others, does Challenge the Belief of every Christian; yet among the great multitude of Truths of various Kinds deliver'd in the Scriptures, some are of far greater Importance and Concernment to us than others, because they do more immediately and directly tend to give us due and worthy Apprehensions of God, and to instruct us in the only sure Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ. There are some Principal Doctrines of Christianity which are in their own Nature apt to have a greater Influence upon our Lives, and more powerfully to restrain us from a course of Sin, and to unite us to the Practice of Vertue and Holiness, than others; and when they have done this, to send us to God the Father to seek for Acceptance meely through Christ his Son. And upon these, and the like accounts, therefore such Truths as these are more particularly necessary to be Believed by us, in order to our Justification before God, and to our Salvation in the other World; and are therefore called the *Articles of our Christian Faith*, being a Summary and Collection of such Doctrines out of the Holy Scriptures, as are of a more Concerning Nature than the rest.

*And must  
therefore be  
distinctly  
Known, and  
explicitly  
Believed,*

All those other Truths, of what Nature soever, contained in the Holy Scriptures, are indeed necessary also to be Believed, at leastwise *Implicitely*; that is, we are to be possess'd with a General Perswasion that

that they are all certainly true, because God has Reveal'd them as such. But these latter which we call the *Articles of our Christian Faith*, must be positively and *Explicitly Believed*, that is, we must thoroughly understand 'em, and be assuredly and distinctly perswaded of each single Truth contained in 'em, as without which understanding and perswasion, a Good and Christian Life will not be wrought in us, nor a reliance on God's Merits in Christ for the acceptance thereof, Created in our Souls.

Such, for instance, is the Belief that there is a God; for this is the very first Principle of all Religion, and must necessarily make us stand in awe, and fear of offending him, if we thoroughly believe and consider it: Such is the Belief, that he is our Father who *Created us and all the World*; for this will make us love him who gave us our Being. And such again is the Belief, that he Exercises a just and a wise Providence in the Government of the World; for this will make us submit our selves to all his Dispensations, as being the Appointments of one who knows better than our selves what is best for us.

And to instance also in some which are the Truths purely of Reveal'd Religion; Such is the Belief, that the Son of God came down from Heaven to suffer Death for us, to Redeem us from the Punishments of Hell; for this, as it shews us how Odious a thing Sin is, when nothing less could satisfy God's Justice against it, than the precious Blood of the Son of God; and consequently, does extremely tend to create in our Hearts an utter hatred to all Sin; So hereby we are taught, that *Christ has made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World*. And such, lastly, is the Belief (for I need not now stand to mention every Article) that all our Bodies shall rise again at the General Resurrection; that then we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to Receive a Just Sentence for *whatever we have done in the Body, whether it be good or bad*; for this will make us careful how to lead our Lives so in this World, that we may not be Condemned in the next.

These now are some of those *Articles of our Christian Faith*, and are such Divine Truths, as are more particularly necessary to be Believed by us, as containing in them the greatest reason in the World to restrain us from all manner of Sin, and to encourage us in the Practice of all Religious Duties. And yet are Doctrines withal of extraordinary force to remove all conceit out of our Minds concerning our own Merits, and to make us rely solely upon God's Mercies in Christ, for the Acceptance of our most Holy Performances. And let this suffice, as to the first thing proposed, which was to declare unto you something in general, of the Nature of the Objects, or of those Truths to be Believed the *Articles of our Christian Faith*. And now,

Secondly, *I will also shew you what it is to BELIEVE these Truths, so as to make us capable of Life and Happiness.*

And if it be ask'd how we must Believe these things, why we must be so thoroughly and firmly perswaded of their undoubted Truth, as to be accordingly Influenced (as I have now said) by the Belief thereof, to the Practice of Good Works, and then to betake our selves to Jesus Christ to Interceed with the Father, for their Gracious Acceptance.

*What it is to Believe those Truths, so as to make us capable of Life and Happiness.*



Our Belief  
thereof must  
be Operative  
and Practical.

I say, our Faith must be such, as does Influence us to a Good Life; for such is the Faith that St. Paul tells us is now required in the Christian Religion in order to Salvation, Gal. 5. 6. In Jesus Christ, says he, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love: Some render the words, and that more rightly, Faith that is perfected by Love; which does more expressly signify the Apostles meaning, that that Faith which will save us, must be such which is perfected by the addition of those Duties which we owe to God and our Neighbour. And St. James does with great Industry shew, that the Christian Faith, which has the promise of Justification and Salvation, is a Powerful, Practical Belief, and that none other has any Promise. What, says St. James, 2. 14. doth it profit my Brethren, tho' a Man saith, he hath Faith, and hath not Works, can Faith save him? Faith, if it have not Works, is dead being alone, v. 17. and is no more than what the Devils have; for the Devils believe and tremble, v. 19.

Such was the  
Faith of  
Abraham, and  
of all the  
Saints.

And the Faith, indeed, for which the Holy Patriarchs and Saints were renowned of Old, and are now so highly Rewarded in Heaven, was a Powerful, Practical, and Working Faith indeed, which excited them to the highest and the hardest Acts of Obedience, that it was possible for Men to perform. Thus, Heb. 11. 17, 18. we read, that by Faith, Abraham, when he was tryed, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the Promises offered up his only begotten Son, and he a Son too in whom God had promised him great Blessings; And yet, at God's Command, he readily Obeyed, believing that God would be as good as his promise to him, tho' it was by raising him again from the Dead. By Faith, Moses, when he was come to Tears, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chusing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of Sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect to the recompence of reward, v. 24, 25, 26. It was a great temptation to Moses to be made a Prince, if he pleased, in which Estate he might enjoy the highest Pleasures this World could afford; but he Believing, that God would infinitely reward him for his Self-denial, in refusing such Worldly Honours and Pleasures, chose rather to be one of those mean Persecuted People, the Children of Israel. By Faith, thousands of Blessed Saints before us, endured tryals of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea, moreover, of Bonds and Imprisonments; they were Stoned, they were Sawn asunder, were Tempted, were Slain with the Sword, they wandered about in Sheep-skins, and in Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, (of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in Deserts, and in Mountains, and in Dens, and in Caves of the Earth, Heb. 11. 35, 36, 37, 38. They were terrible Sufferings which the Servants of God in former times have been put to undergo; but as dreadful as they were, being supported with a firm belief, that they should be infinitely recompenced for their Sufferings and Losses, they thereupon cheerfully underwent the severest, that the Wit or Malice of Men or Devils could invent or inflict upon 'em. Such a powerful, practical, working Faith indeed, was that for which the Holy Patriarchs and Saints were of Old renowned, and are now rewarded in Heaven: A Faith, I say, which excited them to the highest and hardest Acts of



of Obedience, that it was possible for Men to perform. And such a Powerful, Practical, Active and Working Principle is Faith, whenever the things Believed are of great Importance or Concernment to us.

"Some things indeed, as an Excellent Person does well observe, are of such a Nature, that the Belief or Knowledge of 'em goes no farther, but rests in it self, as the Knowledge or Belief of bare Speculative Truths, that do not at all Concern us; but some things again are of such a Nature, as being once firmly and truly believed, and known, carry a Man out to action. Thus, for Example; If you should hear another threaten'd, that he should certainly be Kill'd if he stir out of his House to morrow, it would not hinder you from going Abroad, tho' you firmly believe the threatning, because it is a truth in which you are not Concern'd: But the Person so threaten'd, if he does thoroughly believe the danger, will certainly not stir out of his House that day, because it is a Truth that he is very much Concerned in. On the other side, If you should hear of a Promise made to another Person of a Thousand Pound, if he will be at the Pains to go but to such a place, it will not make you go there, because it is a Promise that you are not Concerned in; but the other Person, if he be certainly perswaded the Promise will be made good to him, will certainly go to the appointed place, because it is a Promise that he is Concerned in.

And such an Operative and Practical Principle is Faith, whenever the Things believed are of great Importance or Concernment to us.

And so likewise, as to the case in hand; That a sure Promise of the Pardon of our Sins, and Eternal Happiness, is made over to us in the Second Covenant, on condition we will forsake the Service of Satan and of Sin, that we will Repent heartily, Believe practically, and Obey sincerely, is a Truth that the Devils (to their great grief) are fully perswaded of; for they believe and tremble, St. James tells us: But this Faith of theirs, does not put them upon Repentance and Amendment, because those gracious Promises do not Concern them, and they have no Promise of Salvation, tho' they should Repent and Amend. But as to us, whom they do Concern, and to whom they are made, if we are really perswaded, that if we amend, we shall be certainly Saved, we shall immediately, upon such perswasion, seriously Repent of what has been done amiss heretofore, and take care to Obey God for the future; for every Man that hath this Hope in God, purifieth himself even as he is pure, 1 Joh. 3. 3.

In short, the Articles of our Christian Faith are every one of 'em so many Motives, and those the most powerful ones in the World, to stir us up to a diligent Reformation of our Hearts and Lives. They are in themselves the most obliging Arguments to it, and with respect to us, they are the most Concerning and Important Truths that can be, containing in the meaning of 'em, either Threatnings to scare us out of Sin, or Promises to allure us to Obedience: Either such considerations as are apt to excite our fears when we are in a course of Impiety, or are Grounds whereon we may build the vastest hopes in the Performance of our Duty. And if any one does not live accordingly, a Godly, Righteous, and a Sober Life, I dare be bold to say, it is owing to some spice of Infidelity lurking in his heart, whereby he is not thoroughly perswaded of, or does not actually consider these Truths; But he that does thoroughly Believe and Consider them, can hardly fail of being a good Liver. Thus necessary, you see it is,

that our Belief of all the Articles of our Christian Faith be such, as does Influence us to good Works; And then, after all,

2. To Believe  
savingly, we  
must apply our  
selves to Je-  
sus Christ, to  
intercede with  
God the Fa-  
ther for our  
Gracious Ac-  
ceptance.

It must be a Belief that causes us to betake our selves to Jesus Christ to Intercede with God the Father for their Gracious Acceptance. This I have formerly, in the beginning of my Exposition, insisted upon; yet such is the growing Infidelity of the World with respect to this, which is the most Essential part of Christian Faith, that it would not be unreasonable, should I again shew you that we must de- pend upon the Mediation of Christ with the Father, for us, that our imperfect Righteousness may be graciously accepted to our Justification.

This is that Act of Faith which is called in Scripture *Believing in Christ*; and so such a Believing as this it is, that our Justification is Attributed by St. Paul, Gal. 2. 16. *Know this, that a Man is not Justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we have Believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be Justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law; for by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be Justified.* And as this Act of Faith, the Relying upon God's Mercies in Christ, does wonderfully exalt the Divine Justice and Mercy, so it leaves no place to the Creature to Attribute any part of its Happiness to itself; but does utterly exclude all occasions of Boasting. *God hath for Jesus Christ his Son to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins, that are past, through the forbearance of God. Where is Boasting then? it is excluded. By what Law, of Works? nay, but by the Law of Faith, Rom. 2. 25, 27.* So that it is not enough that we Believe punctually; but it is moreover necessary that we rely also on God's Mercies in Christ, that our imperfect Holiness may be accepted; or otherwise, even our Assent to all the Articles of the Christian Faith will not avail us to our Justification and Salvation; which brings me,

What to Be-  
lieve All the  
Articles of the  
Christian  
Faith.

1. To Believe  
them All does  
Import, that  
we must Assent  
to all and eve-  
ry one of these  
great Articles  
of Christian  
Doctrine con-  
tained in the  
Apostles Creed.

Lastly, To shew you what it is to Believe A L L the Articles of our Christian Faith. And,

To Believe A L L these Articles does Import, that we must Assent with a through perswasion of their undoubted Truth, and of their Divine Authority, to all and every one of those great Articles of Christian Doctrine contained in the Apostles Creed. This Collection, or Summary of Christian Doctrine, is called by St. Paul, Rom. 6. 17. *That Form of Doctrine which was deliver'd to the Christians*; that is, that Summary of Christian Doctrine, to the Belief and Practice of which they were deliver'd up, and solemnly Consecrated in their Baptism. And the same is call'd, 2 Tim. 1. 13. *The Form of sound words which was heard of the Apostle himself*; and we are commanded to hold it fast; that is, to take care not to depart from it in any part thereof.

And as we must not shrink from the Confession and Belief of any one of those Articles, which have been handed down to us from the Apostles, in that Summary, or *Form of sound words*, which makes up the Body of our Christian Faith; so we must content our selves with the Belief of A L L those saving Truths, and must not think there is any thing more to be Believ'd by our selves, or others, as necessary to Salvation.

But



But especially, we must take care of *Testing* our Minds with a *Perseverance* of the Truth of such Articles, as do tend to destroy what the true Genuine Doctrines of Christianity, viz. *All the Articles of our Christian Faith*, do Build; as do all, or most at leastwise, of the New Articles impos'd upon the Belief of Christians in the Romish Church. Some of those Articles in the Romish Creed, do plainly take away the necessity of a Good Life, as might be easily made appear, were it proper here to enlarge on that Point. And other Doctrines of that Church, do as apparently take Men off from depending solely upon the Mediation of Christ with his Father, that he would graciously accept and pass by the Imperfection of the good they do, teaching 'em to apply themselves to the Blessed Virgin, and other Saints, as Mediators with God for 'em. Nay, and some of their Doctrines, as that of *Merits*, and of *Works of Super-erogation*, do teach 'em proudly to overvalue their own Performances, and to *boast* themselves in their Merit. And therefore so far must we be from suffering our selves to be persuaded of the Truth of *All* these, and the like Doctrines, as Articles of our Christian Faith, that we must utterly dissent from them all, as Unjust and Unreasonable Impositions on the Belief of Christians. In a word; as we must strengthen our selves in the Belief of *All* those True and Genuine Articles of the Christian Faith, so to Believe *All* these, as necessary to Salvation, is enough. But to Believe more, under the Character of Articles of a Christian's Faith, especially if they be such Doctrines as do take off the fears of Sinning, and send us to *other Mediators betwixt God and Man, besides the Man Christ Jesus*; this is indeed a Belief, not only superfluous, as being a Belief of more than *All* the necessary Articles of a Christian's Faith, but is a very sinful, and criminal, and superstitious Persuasion.

*Such as tend to destroy a good Life, and send us to other Mediators than Christ, to interceed with the Father for its Acceptance, no Articles of Christian Faith.*

2. To Believe *All the Articles of the Christian Faith*, is not only to Assent to *All*, and every of those Articles in the Gross, *but to be fully persuaded of all and every of those single Truths contained in each of those Articles.* Every one of the Articles of our Christian Faith is full of a great deal of Meaning, and many of them do contain Truths of various Kinds and Importance. Thus, for instance, To believe that Jesus Christ was *Crucify'd, Dead, and Buried*, does import this *Comfortable*, as well as *Fundamental* Doctrine of Christianity, *That the Only Son of God suffered Death upon the Cross for our Redemption, and that he made there by that one Oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World.* And accordingly it is said, *1 Pet. 3. 18. That Christ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* And *21. 24.* it is said, *That he himself did bear our sins in his own body on the Tree.*

*2. To Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, is so be fully persuaded of all, and of every of those single Truths contained in each of those Articles.*

But then this is not the whole that is meant in that Grand Article, but also this other Doctrine, That he suffered to *Redeem us from all Iniquity*; that is, he suffered on the Cross the punishment of our Sins, *that we seeing how odious a thing Sin is, which could not be Aton'd for by a Sacrifice less valuable than the Blood of the Son of God, might therefore abhor it, and forsake it.* And this is also taught us in the very place now cited from *St. Peter*, viz. *1 Ep. 2. 24. He his own self bare our sins in his own Body upon the Tree, that we being dead to Sin should live unto Righteousness.*

And



A Heretick  
may be such by  
Believing only  
of one of those  
Truths con-  
tained in the  
Article.

And now a Person may become Guilty of Heresie by believing only one of those Truths contained in the Articles. And accordingly there are two opposite Heresies, which do at this day most grievously afflict the Church of Christ amongst us, and they do divide these two great Doctrines, contain'd in this one Article, betwixt 'em. And they are therefore Heresies, because they do so divide 'em, and do not each of 'em Believe both these important Doctrines. The *Antinomians* do Believe indeed, that Christ did satisfie the Divine Justice for our Sins, but so as to leave no Conditions to be perform'd by them. And the *Socinians*, on the other side, owning that he came to draw us off from Sin, deny that he made any Satisfaction for us; So that both do fundamentally Err in the Faith, tho' they Believe the Article in the groſs, that Christ was *Crucify'd, Dead and Buried*, because neither of them Believe the whole Truth contain'd in that Article. And therefore, as you must Believe *All* the Articles, so *All* those Divine and Necessary Truths which are contain'd in every Article of your Christian Faith, according to the full Explication and Meaning thereof, given us in the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds. These Creeds do not contain more, or different Articles of Faith, than the Apostles Creed does; but in these *Creeds*, many Articles of our Christian Faith are express'd in the full Sense and Importance of 'em, in opposition to those Heresies which did, and do still pervert, or restrain the Meaning of those Articles. And thus you also see, how you are to Believe *All the Articles of your Christian Faith*; that you are not only to Believe every one of 'em, but all that Divine Truth which is contained in each.

And so, as I have before laid before you, how you are to Renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, so now, what it is to Believe *all the Articles of your Christian Faith*. And so it only remains (and then I shall have fully Explain'd to you all the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace) that I shew you next, what it is to obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our Life.

THE

T H E  
XXIII. Lecture.

**Thirdly, That I should Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of my Life.**

**I** Hope I have sufficiently explained unto you, the Two first *Conditions* bound upon you in your *Baptismal Covenant*, as indispensibly necessary to your obtaining the Benefits of it; which *Conditions* are, *First*, That you should *Renounce the Devil*, &c. *Secondly*, That you should *Believe*, &c. And now I come to the *Third*; which is, That you should *Obey*, &c.

And that I may fully, and to the purpose, explain this to you, I will,

*First*, Lay before you, what it is to *Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments*; or how far you must be obedient to the Holy Will and Commandments of God, as ever you will hope to obtain Salvation, or to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

*Secondly*, I will shew you, what it is to *Walk in the same all the Days of your Life*; or how long you must persevere in such Obedience, which must be to the end of your Lives. And,

*Thirdly*, I will clear the Doctrine of *Evangelical Obedience*, as so stated, from those Doubts that may be raised against it.

And, *First*, Because nothing can be more necessary for you to be instructed in, than the *Measures of that Obedience*, now under the Gospel, or *Covenant of Grace*; upon the performance of less than which, you cannot expect to be made *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*; I will, with what clearness I can, shew you, How far we must be Obedient to *God's Holy Will and Commandments*, as ever we'll hope to obtain Salvation, or to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

And that *Evangelical or Gospel-Obedience*, which now under the *Covenant of Grace*, is the indispensable Condition of Man's Salvation, (to give it you according as it is most exactly stated by the Learned Author of *The Measures of Christian Obedience*; for it is impossible, I do think, for any one to do it more exactly; therefore I shall give you an Abstract of that whole Work :) *Is a sincere and entire Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel: Sincere it must be, by being a true and un-*

*1. What it is to obey God's Holy Will and Commandments.*

*The Nature and Measures of Christian Obedience.*

*dissembled Service of God, (opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of obeying Him, when in reality we only serve our own Selves, or our own Lusts and Interests.) Entire it must be, by being the Obedience of the whole Man, to the whole Will of God, and that, at all times; with this abatement of Rigour, That all our unwilling and involuntary Failings, which, through Ignorance and Frailty, we commit, shall, upon our Prayers to God, and Charity to our Neighbour, be forgiven us; and even our wilful Transgressions, when we repent and forsake 'em, through the Mediation of Christ, and the Grace of the Gospel, shall not be imputed to our Condemnation. Such is the Obedience which every one of you must carefully pay to the Holy Will and Commandments of God, as ever you hope to be Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. But for your better understanding the Nature and Extent of your Christian Obedience, I will a little farther unfold each Part of this Description of it. And,*

*1st. Our Obedience must be sincere, by being a true and undissembled Service of God, opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of obeying Him, when in truth we serve our own selves.*

I. Our Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel must be sincere, by being a true and undissembled Service of God, opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of obeying Him, when in reality we only serve our own selves. This is a certain Truth, That our Gracious God, for the most part, hath made such Things the Matter of His Laws, and of our Duty, as really make for our own Interest, Reputation, or Profit to perform; for so it really is to be Temperate, and Chaste, and Contented, and Humble; to be Upright, and Charitable, and Peaceable, &c. But then our Obedience is sincere, and done as unto God, when we observe His Laws for His sake, and because He commands it; for otherwise we do not observe God's Will, but our own: His Commands had no share in what we did, because it had been done although He had said nothing. And thus sincere must our Obedience be unto God (as ever we expect that God should Judge us at the last Day to have obeyed Him:) I say, it must be done as unto God; and sincerely from our Hearts to please Him, and not only our selves. And this is plainly expressed in the very Words of the Gospel, for it accepts not an heartless Service, nor accounts it self obeyed by what was never intended for it: *The Lord thy God requires of thee to serve him with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul*, Matth. 22. 36, 37. And therefore St. Paul does pray, that the *Philippians* may be sincere in their Profession, *being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, or Good Works, to the Praise and Glory of God, not themselves*, Phil. 1. 10, 11.

*God does not forbid us all intending our Advantage in the performance of his Commandments.*

God indeed has not forbidden us all intending and designing of our own Advantage in the performance of his Commandments. When He requires us to obey Him, He doth not forbid us all Love of our Selves, and Regard to our own Self-interests: For why? He does propose to us in Scripture the greatest Rewards possible, as Motives to us, to persuade us to obey. And the Blessed Saints in the Scripture, so Eminent for their Service to God, are said to have had an eye at the *Recompense of Reward*. But then our Intention of our own Advantage in God's Service is forbidden, and renders our obedient Performances corrupt and insincere, when together with our Intention of serving God, we either join, first, another Intention of serving Sin: Or, secondly, when we design some temporal Ends, as much, or more, than we design God's Service.

*First,*



*First*, I say, That Man's Obedience is insincere, *who together with his Intentions of serving God, joins another Intention of serving Sin*; as if a Man (as our Saviour tells us the Pharisees did) make long Prayers, and other Professions of Religion, to enable him the better, and without suspicion, to devour Widows Houses, as well as serve God. Where his obedient Performances flow from such a mixture of Design as this, they will in no wise be owned as an obedient, but punished as a sinful Service.

*But, 1st. that Man's Obedience is insincere, who together with his Intention of serving God, joins another Intention of serving Sin.*

*Secondly*, Again, Men's Obedience is insincere, *when they design some temporal Ends in the practice of Virtue, as much or more than they design God's Service*; as when a Man is temperate, and will not drink, which is his Duty indeed, but yet only because he cannot without making himself sick. But when, in the performance of any Virtue, a Man has a regard as much, if not more, to his Profit or Ease, than to the Commands of God, in that case this Obedience is also insincere, and will be far from entitling him to be an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven: For thus to have as much regard to our worldly Profit or Pleasure, in the performance of any Duty, as to please God, is a degrading of Him; it is a setting up the World for His Rival: And to bring other Things in Competition with Him, is plainly to renounce Him. In respect of our Love to God, we must even hate Father and Mother, Wife and Children, the dearest Interests and Concerns we have in the World. He will be served and respected above all; for He is jealous of the Pre-eminence of His Service above all Things, as an Husband is of his Wife's Love to him above other Men: *I the Lord, saith he, am a jealous God*, Exod. 20. 5. And so much for that Sincerity which is required of us, as the first Qualification of an Acceptable Obedience.

*2dly, When he designs some temporal Ends in the practice of Virtue, as much, or more, than he intends God's Service.*

II. That Evangelical or Gospel-Obedience, which now, under the Covenant of Grace; is the indispensable Condition of every Man's Salvation, must be an entire Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel. Now this Integrity of our Obedience is such a Perfection and Compleatness of it, as excludes all Maimedness and Defects; and this in another Word is ordinarily express'd in Scripture by *Uprightness*, or *walking uprightly*. And to be upright in God's Ways, is not to stumble and fall by Sin or Disobedience; but to be perfect and entire, or wanting nothing in obedient Performances.

*2dly, Evangelical Obedience must be entire, viz.*

And that our Obedience may be thus entire and upright, it must be, *First*, The Obedience of the whole Man: *Secondly*, To the whole Law: And, *Thirdly*, performed at all times.

*First*, That our Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel may be entire, and so avail us to Life and Happiness, it must be the Obedience of the whole Man; that is, we must take care to obey, with all the Powers and Faculties of our Nature: We must have our Understandings, our Wills, our Affections, and our Bodily Powers, obedient to God's Laws. And for this, the very Letter of the Law is express; for when the Lawyer ask'd our Saviour, *What shall I do to inherit eternal Life*, Luke 10. 25. our Saviour ask'd, how it is written in the Law; who answering that it is written, *Thou shalt love* (that is, serve, as it is Deut. 10. 13.) *the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, or Will, with all thy Soul, or Affections, with all thy Strength, or Bodily Powers, and with all thy Mind, or Understanding*, vers. 16, 27. When the

*1st. The Obedience of the whole Man; that is,*

Lawyer

Lawyer answered him, That thus indeed it was written in the Law (as it was *Deut. 11.*) our Saviour told him, he answered right; and bid him *do this, and he should live.* Obedience, with all the Powers, and with the whole Nature, is the Means of Life, and the indispensable Condition of our eternal Happiness. And,

*In the first  
place of the  
Mind and  
Understanding.*

*First,* We must keep all God's Commandments with our Mind, or Understanding; that is, all the Thoughts and Imaginations, all the Contrivances and Counsels of our Hearts, must be governed by, and kept in obedience to the Laws of the Gospel; so that we must not indulge our selves, nor entertain in our Hearts evil Thoughts, wanton and vain Thoughts; nor must we purpose and contrive wicked and unjust Things, no more than we must outwardly act them. Thus the Apostle, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* tells us, That *the Weapons of a Christian's Warfare, must be mighty through God, to the pulling down Strong-holds, to the casting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and to the bringing into captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ.* This Text forbids all Thoughts and Contrivances of Sin.

*Secondly, of  
the Will.*

*Secondly,* As ever we hope to have our Obedience avail us to Life and Happiness; as we must keep our Minds and Understandings, so likewise our Wills, in Obedience to God's Commands. The Choice, as well as the Practice of our Duty, is plainly necessary to render it available to our Salvation; but, on the other side, he that would sin, if he could conveniently and opportunely; if he chuse Sin, although he miss of opportunity to act it; the bare Choice, without the Practice, is sufficiently to his Condemnation. Thus our Lord Himself has determined it, *Whoever looks on a Woman to lust after her, or so long till his Heart consent to commit Lewdness with her, if he could, though he never meet with an opportunity to act it, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart,* *Matth. 5. 28.* This Text shews us, that we may disobey in Willing, as well as Doing; and that we shall be condemned for a wicked Choice, as well as a wicked Practice.

*Thirdly, of the  
Affections.*

*Thirdly,* As we will render to God the Obedience of the whole Man, an *entire Obedience*, such as will avail us to Salvation; we must regulate our Souls and Affections, conforming them wholly to what God commands: That is, we must love our Duty, as well as do it; and not to do it merely out of Fear, but of out Love. To pretend Obedience to God, and yet to love what he forbids; to make a show of his Service, and yet in our very Hearts to hanker after his vilest Enemies, our Sins, whom above all Things his Soul hates; this surely is not honestly to Serve, but grossly to Collogue, and flatly to Dissemble with Him. And we must not do our Duty merely out of Fear, I say, but out of Love; for thus to serve God against our Wills, is to submit to Him, as a Slave doth to a tyrannous Lord; not through any Kindness for him, but through a hateful Fear of him. But this is such a hateful way of performing Obedience, as God will never endure, nor accept of; for He scorns to be served by a slavish Fear, and an unwilling Mind. *No Man* (as our Saviour says, *Matth. 6. 24.*) *can serve two Masters; for if he loves the one, he will hate the other: He cannot serve God and Mammon.* By this he lets us know, that our Love and Obedience must go together, and be paid both to one God.

*Lastly,*

*Lastly.* As we will give God the Service and Obedience of the whole Man, an Entire Obedience, such as he will Accept of to our Salvation, we must Obey him with all our Strength and bodily Powers: That is, we must not only Inwardly Approve of God's Commands as good in our Minds and Judgments, bear a Love to 'em with our Affections, and chuse 'em with our Wills; but we must proceed Outwardly to Act, and do the Will of God in the Outward and Constant Practice of our Lives; we must put to our Strength and bodily Powers, and work the Will of God in our Lives and Actions. *Little Children*, saith St. John, 1 Epist. 3. 7. *let no Man deceive you; he that doth Righteousness, is righteous*: That is, you will be deceived, if you suffer others to persuade you, or vainly flatter your selves, that there is any thing less than doing and acting vertuously and righteously, for which you shall be rewarded as vertuous and religious Persons. These Texts, besides many others, shew you the necessity, that our Inward good Motions, proceed to Outward good Operations; that you must go on to do good Deeds, before you are fit for the Great Reward; that we must work, as well as desire, and not only will and like, but do our Duty; because on nothing less than that we shall at the last Day be accepted.

This indeed is the severe Service, and the distastful Part of our Duty. A secret Wish, or a sudden Desire of Obedience, may start up in our Souls unawares; and there is not much opposition made to it, because our Lusts receive no great hurt from it: And therefore they will allow us to think of Good, to spend a faint Relish, a sudden Inclination, or fruitless Desire upon it; but if once we would go on to do our Duty, and to begin Obedience, then begins the Conflict; our Lusts then bestir themselves with might and main, and set every Faculty on work to resist and defeat it; for our Thoughts then begin to argue and to pick Quarrels with our Duty, our Wills then begin to be averse, and our Affections to cool towards it.

*This the distastful part;*

And because in this Obedience of our Works and Actions, there is so much of difficulty, therefore are most People so desirous to shift it off, and so forward to take up with any thing which will save them the labour of it: They persuade themselves, that God will admit of easier Terms; and build their Hopes on cheaper Services; as particularly, that it will be sufficient to Salvation, that they *Believe the Gospel*, and that *Jesus Christ died for them*; that God will accept of the *Will for the Deed*; that God will excuse their Disobedience, because when they fall, it is by reason of strong and violent Temptations: And, lastly, that it is not without Reluctancy and great Unwillingness that they disobey. But all these are deceitful Imaginations; for howsoever we are against Sin in our Thoughts, and Minds, and Desires, the working Wickedness will make us, in God's account, Sons of Sin and Disobedience, and will be sure to render such Children of Wrath and Destruction. *If you live after the Flesh*, saith St. Paul, *you shall die*, Rom. 8. 13. And whatever Men think in their Minds, or desire in their Hearts, or profess in their Words to the contrary; if for all that they continue to commit Sin in their Actions, Christ has told them plainly, That he will pronounce (when he comes to sit as Judge) *Depart from me, all ye that work Iniquity*, Matth. 7. 23.

*And therefore  
undevoured  
to be shifted  
off.*



And thus you see what is, in the first place, necessary to make up an *Entire Obedience*; that our Obedience might be that of the whole Man; and that it may be such, we must have our Minds, our Wills, our Affections, and, lastly, our outward Actions, in Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel; that all these several Powers must unite in God's Service, before it will be *Upright* and *Compleat*, such as at present his Law requires, and such as at the last Day he will accept of, and reward us for.

2dly, It must be an Obedience to the whole Law.

*Secondly*, As it is necessary to the *Integrity* of our Obedience, that we Obey his Holy Will and Commandments with our whole Man, with our Minds, our Souls, our Wills, and our Strength; so that we Obey his whole Law, and Conform our selves to every of his Commandments. We must not think to pick and chuse in the doing of our Duty; for if we do not Obey all, we Obey not right in any; because all the Laws of God are bound upon us by the same Power, and enjoined by the same Authority: So that if we fulfill any one upon this account of his having required it; the same reason holds for the fulfilling of all the rest.

This indeed is very hardly believed, because it is so hard to practise; for almost every Man has some Sin or other, which he can as well die as part with: It has got his Heart, and is become the Master of his Affections; and since he loves it so dearly, he hopes God will bear with it too.

And when Men are thus desirous to Obey God by halves, and would hope that this might serve the turn, they take to themselves false Grounds and Confidences, under which they shelter themselves, in the allowance or indulgence of such Sins, as they are resolved to practise; and when they do wilfully continue in the practice of any Sin, they usually plead one or more of these Things in excuse:

This endeavoured to be evaded by Excuses;

*First*, That they stand for the preservation of their Religion and themselves, in times of Danger and Persecution: Or, *secondly*, for the supply of their Necessities by sinful Arts, Compliances, and Services, and in times of Want and Indigency: Or, *thirdly*, for the satisfaction of their Flesh, in Sins of Temper, Age, or Way of Life.

But in vain.

But whosoever would Obey God's Laws, to the Salvation of his Soul, must Obey in every Instance, and continue wilfully to transgress in none; he must never hope to please God in nothing, but what he lists himself: For the Obedience of the Covenant, whereinto Christ commissioned his Apostles to Baptize Converts, is nothing below an *Entire Obedience*: Go, says he, Baptize all Nations, teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matth. 28. 19, 20. And threatens, Matth. 5. 19. That he who breaks the least of these Commandments, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, or none at all, which is the sense of the Hebrew Phrase. So that the Obedience upon which alone we must expect to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*, must be a Faithful and Entire Obedience to all the Laws and Commands of the Gospel. Thus we must Obey all God's Holy Will and Commandments; which brings me,

3dly, What it is to Walk in the same all the Days of our Lives.

*III.* To my general Proposal; which was, to shew you, *What it is to Walk in the same all the Days of our Lives*; we must continue in such a Sincere and Entire Obedience, even to the End of our Lives. We must not think to please God by an Obedience, that comes and

goes

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goes by Fits; or by serving him only at such times as we are in Humour, and have no Temptation to the contrary; but our Service of Him must be Constant and Uniform; we must obey Him in all things, and wilfully transgress in none.

Some indeed there are, who parcel out their Time, and divide it betwixt God and their Sins; they observe a constant course of Transgressing and Repenting, of Sin and Sorrow; for they are always won when they are tempted, and they are always sorrowful when they have done: And others there are, who wholly fall off at last, and sin against God for altogether.

But now as for such a broken Service as this is, God will by no means accept of it: For when Christ comes to Judgment, he will pass Sentence upon Men according to what they are then, and not according to what they have been formerly. *If the righteous Man turn away from his Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, and do according to all that the wicked Man doth; Shall he live? No, by no means: For all his Righteousness that he hath done formerly, shall not be mentioned; but in his Trespas that he hath since trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath since sinned, in them shall he die, Ezek. 18. 24.* And it is they, which by patient continuing in Well-doing, seek for Glory and Immortality, that shall inherit eternal Life, Rom. 2. 6, 7.

But as for all those who fall off from a good Course, and turn Apostates from Obedience, their Case is desperate, and their Condition extremely damnable: For if after Men have once escaped the Pollution of the World, through the Knowledge of Christ's Gospel, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; then is the latter End worse with them than the Beginning, 2 Pet. 2. 20. So that the Obedience which God will accept, and which will render us Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; must be, as of our whole Man, and to all the Laws of the Gospel; so it must be perform'd to 'em at all times: We must persevere in it through all Seasons, and take care both to live and die in it; for our Reward will be dispenced unto us, according to the nature of our Service, at the time of Payment, and be only, as our Saviour says, *that endureth to the End, shall be saved, Matth. 10. 22.*

And thus I have shew'd you, first, What it is to Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, or how far you must be Obedient to the Holy Will and Commandments of God, as ever you will hope to obtain Salvation, or to be Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven: And, secondly, I have also shewed you, What it is to Walk in the same all the Days of your Life, or how long you must persevere in such Obedience, even to the End of your Lives. In short, I have also shewed you, That the Obedience which is the Condition of our Salvation, even now under the Gospel, must be a Sincere and Entire Observance of all the Laws of Christianity. Sincere it must be, as I have shewed you, by being a true and undissembled Service, opposite to all Hypocrisie, or a false and feigned Pretence of Obeying him, when in reality we only serve our own selves, our own Lusts and Interests. And Entire it must be, by being the Obedience of the whole Man, to the whole Law; and not for some short, but for our whole Time, and to the End of our Lives.

But

Object.

But here it will be demanded, That if this be that Obedience, which now under the Gospel, or *Covenant of Grace*, is required, as the indispensable Condition of our being made *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*; wherein lies the difference between this, and the *First Covenant*, or *Covenant of Works*, which Christ came to purchase our Freedom from, and to establish this in its room? The Condition of the First (as I have told you) was no less than a *Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience*, the never offending in any one Point; and if our Obedience now must be so *Sincere* and *Entire* an Obedience of the Whole Man, to all the Laws of the Gospel, and this to be performed at all times (as has been now described) wherein does this come short, you'll say, of that *Perfect Obedience*, required of us in our State of Innocency, or that *Legal Obedience* required under the *Covenant of Works*?

Answ.

The difference  
between E-  
vangelical  
and a Legal  
Obedience.

And now therefore, to clear the Doctrine of *Evangelical Obedience*, as thus stated from any such Doubt, as if there were no difference betwixt the Covenants in matter of Rigour; I shall shew that there is a very material Difference, and such as makes this we are now under, deservedly be styled a *Covenant of Grace*. And the difference is this, That whereas under the First, the Obedience was to be so perfect, that there was no Mercy upon the least Transgression; but the Offender became immediately liable to the threatned Punishment. Now under the Second, as *Sincere* and *Entire* as our Obedience must be; yet no more is required at our hands, than what by God's Grace, and our own honest Endeavours, we shall be enabled to perform. And therefore since the Weakness of our Nature is such, that we cannot continue in an unsinuing Obedience; though all our wilful and chosen Sins indeed, if persisted in, will still put a Barr to our Salvation; yet all our Unavoidable *Infirmities*, and Involuntary Transgressions, shall be constantly forgiven us; and even our Wilful and more Heinous Sins, when by Repentance we bewail and forsake 'em, and take better care to Avoid 'em for the future, they also, through the Mediation of Christ, according to the Terms he has obtained for us in the *Covenant of Grace*, shall be forgiven us, and not prejudice our being *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

This difference not so great, but that our wilful and chosen Sins will put a Barr to our Salvation.

True it is, the difference betwixt the *Covenant of Works*, and the *Covenant of Grace*, is not so great, but our *Wilful Chosen Sins*, if still persisted in, will put a Barr to our Salvation. A wilful Sin is when we see and consider of the Sinfulness of any Action, which we are tempted to, and after that chuse to Act and Perform it. Every Sin against Knowledge and Conscience, is a wilful Sin, when our own Heart rebukes and checks us at the time of Sinning, telling us, that God hath forbidden that which we are about to do; notwithstanding which, we presume to do it. And as for them, they are all of an heinous Guilt, and of a crying Nature; such Sins are a despising of God's Law, and therefore are call'd *Presumptuous Sins*, and are said to be acted through a *Rebellious Pride*, and with an high Hand, *Numb.* 15. 30.

And those who have committed such, are said, *Heb.* 10. 29. to have done despite to the Spirit of Grace, because as well the Spirit of God, as their own Reason have resisted 'em in the committing of such Sins, which Resistance notwithstanding they have violently broke through.

And



And as to such Sins therefore, they will make us the Children of Wrath, and subject us to punishment, as well now, as under the Law, as is evident from that place, *Heb. 10. 28, 29.* now mentioned: *He that despised Moses's Law, died without Mercy; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing, (which they do who do wholly apostatize) and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace?* which they do who do sin wilfully.

And this they will be accounted to do, whether such Sins be *Directly* and Expressly Wilful and Chosen, or only *Indirectly* so, and by Interpretation. Sometimes Men eye and view the Sin they are about to commit, before they chuse or act; they pause and deliberate, doubt and demurr about it; they have a Conflict and Dispute in their own Minds, whether they should commit or keep off from it: And when notwithstanding this they commit it, that Sin is then directly and expressly chosen and wilful, and done in despite of the Spirit of Grace, and is therefore of a very heinous and damning Nature.

But besides these, there are other sinful Actions which are not chosen directly and expressly, but only *indirectly*, and by interpretation; that is, when Men expressly chuse such a state of Things, as make some sinful Actions after that, to be no longer a matter of free Choice, but almost necessary and unavoidable. Thus he that wilfully drinks till he is drunk, and then in his Drink commits Murder and Uncleaness, or any other mad Frolicks, or sinful Extravagances, without any deliberation or consideration at all, shall nevertheless be judged to have wilfully committed those Sins, because he did deliberately and wilfully fall into that Sin of Drunkenness, which when he was in (by depriving himself of his Reason) made those, or any other Sins, unavoidable at that time. So again, he that watches not over, but indulges and gives way to his Passions, and in his Anger kills a Man; and he that accustoms himself to a Sin so often, that he knows not when he commits it, as to swear, in either of these cases also, he shall be judged wilfully in God's account to have committed Murder, and to have sworn; because any Man may chuse to indulge and humour his Passions, or to accustom himself to that Sin, which makes his falling into other Sins so unavoidable. And, lastly, he that wilfully neglects the means of attaining to any Grace or Vertue, will be judged wilfully to have omitted his Duty, which in the use of due means he might have done acceptably. Thus in either of these cases, when Men fall into any Sin, either by Drunkenness, or by indulging, and not watching over their Passions; or by reason of having long accustomed themselves to such Sins; or, lastly, by neglecting the Means of attaining to any Grace or Vertue: In any of these cases, he that commits a Sin, his Sin will be accounted as *indirectly*, and interpretatively chosen and voluntary, because he did willingly do those things which brought and betray'd him into such Sin; or wilfully neglected those Means which would have preserved him from them. And so his Sin will be condemned, as a chosen and wilful Sin, and a Transgression of God's Law, and he punished as a wilfully disobedient Person. So that the difference between the Law and the Gospel is not such, as that wilful Sins

But the difference is, 1<sup>st</sup>. that those who sincerely and entirely obey, shall not be called to an account for unchosen and involuntary sins. shall be now unpunish'd. But here the difference is very great and comfortable; and it is this, That,

*First*, Our unchosen and involuntary Sins, which, through the Weakness and Frailty of our Nature, we cannot always avoid, through the Mediation of Christ, now under the Covenant of Grace; those who sincerely and entirely Obey the Laws of the Gospel, shall not be called to an account for such.

And such unchosen and involuntary Sins, are those which we commit either through *Ignorance*, because we did not understand our Duty; or through *Inconsideration*, because we did not think of it. And unless our Ignorance and Inconsideration be themselves wilful, we shall not be condemned for the Failings we have committed through either of 'em.

*The first cause of an innocent Involuntariness, Ignorance of our Duty.* The first cause of an innocent and pardonable Involuntariness, is *Ignorance* of our Duty, when we do what God forbids, because we do not know that He has forbid it; for such Failings as we ignorantly commit, we shall not be condemned under the Covenant of Grace; for Christ, who is our High Priest, as St. Paul assures us, will have compassion on the Ignorant, and them that are out of the Way, Heb. 5. 2.

*Provided it be not wilful.* True it is, there are those that are wilfully ignorant; for either they shut their Eyes, and will not see their Duty, or they are idle and careless, and will not enquire after it: So that if they do not know their Duty, it is because they do not desire the Knowledge of it, or will be at no pains for it; they neither read the Word, nor come to hear it, nor to be Catechised; and if they do come, neither think nor consider afterwards upon what they have heard; nor pray to God to make all those means of Knowledge effectual to their Salvation. And in the neglect of these Means of Knowledge, they make themselves wilfully ignorant; and so their Ignorance will not be their Excuse, but their condemning Sin, because it was wilful and chosen. But if you have an honest Heart, desirous to be taught, that you may know and do your Duty; and use an honest Industry, by Reading, coming to be Catechised, by constantly Hearing of the Word. If thus you do all that lies upon you to be informed what you ought to do, and yet afterwards, if through Misunderstanding, you fail, then through the Grace of the Gospel, and the Mediation of our Saviour, what you have been wanting in, will not be imputed to your Condemnation. Nor,

*2d. Inconsideration.* Secondly, What you do unwillingly commit through *Inconsideration*. We sometimes do things we do not think nor consider the Evil of 'em when we commit 'em; and so their Sinfulness being unseen, is also unchosen; and these Slips do so steal from us, without our Consideration and thinking of 'em, several ways; either, first, by surprize, and a sudden Temptation. And thus St. Paul, upon an unexpected occasion, was surprized into a sudden Anger, and into an unadvised Irreverence towards the High Priest, Acts 23. 1, 2, 3. And the beginnings of a single Passion, whether of Anger or Envy, and the unadvised Slips of the Tongue, generally enter this way. Or, secondly, we venture upon several Actions without thinking of their sinfulness, through our natural Weariness, and the length and constancy of a Tem-

*Inconsideration on excuses, 1. When through surprize.*

Temptation. Thus in times of Affliction, or Sickness, by the uneasiness of the Flesh, and the hardness of Man's Condition, a Person is sometimes tempted to fret and murmur, and to be peevish and repining: And so we find it was with *Job*, who though a Man patient to a Proverb, and one to whom, by the Testimony of God Himself, *there was none Equal in the whole Earth, a perfect and an upright Man, one who feared God, and eschewed Evil*, *Job* 1. 8. Yet this Man, I say, of admirable Constancy and Patience, was wearied out of his Watchfulness, by a tedious trial of Afflictions; and in that time of his Unadvisedness, uttered many Things impatient with his Lips, as appear from his whole History. And, lastly, we sometimes inconsiderately and unadvisedly do an ill Thing, by reason of the violent Discomposure and Disturbance of our thinking Powers, when our Mind is so disturbed, that on a sudden we cannot think what we do; as upon a sudden Grief, Anger, or Fear. And thus *Samuel*, who was a Person so dear to God, that if he could be intreated by any Man, he tells us it would be by him, or *Moses*, standing to intercede before him; did yet in an instance that would have drawn him into the hazard of his Life, dispute God's Command, when he should have perform'd it, and question where in Duty it became him to Obey; for when God did bid him go and Anoint *David* King, which Service was sure to draw upon him the implacable Hatred of *Saul*; through the sudden force of that frightful Thought, instead of Obeying, he answers again, saying, *How can I go? for if Saul hear of it, he will kill me*, *1 Sam.* 16. 1, 2. So that as for those Slips, which we do unwillingly commit, through either of these Causes of *Inconsideration*, they are a matter of God's Mercy, and will be graciously born with, and forgiven now under the Gospel and *Covenant of Grace*; for all those Persons now mentioned as guilty of the like, *St. Paul*, *Job*, and *Samuel*, were in a state of Grace, and the dear Children of God; I say therefore, they will be graciously born with, and forgiven.

Provided, first, we never be guilty of 'em, when we have understanding of, and time to observe 'em, nor, secondly, in any great and crying Sin, as *Murder*, *Adultery*, &c. for no Man can pretend he did unwittingly commit such things, as a Man's Conscience will presently start at: Provided, thirdly, we do endeavour and strive, and watch against 'em: And, lastly, after we find that we have fallen into 'em, provided we be sorry, and earnestly beg God's pardon for 'em. Provided thus, such Slips and Infirmities, as we do commit unadvisedly and inconsiderately; shall not be laid to our charge.

And thus you see, that our *unavoidable* Infirmities, and our *unwilling* Transgressions, which through an unaffected *Ignorance*, and an involuntary *Inconsideration*, we do commit, shall not be imputed to our Condemnation now under the Gospel, or *Covenant of Grace*. And this is the first great Difference between the First *Covenant*, wherein the least Sin was Unpardonable, and this Second *Covenant*, or the *Covenant of Grace*, wherein, through the Mediation of *CHRIST*, all our Unwilling, Involuntary Infirmities, shall be graciously pass'd by.

2. When through natural weariness, and the length and strength of a Temptation.

Lastly, when by the violent discomposure of our Thinking Powers, our Minds are so disturbed, that we cannot think what we do.

Ignorance and Inconsideration excuse not these Sins, 1. Which we have time to understand and observe; nor, 2. Crying Sins; nor, 3. Those we do not endeavour against; nor, lastly, Which we are not sorry for.



The 2d. Difference betwixt Legal and Evangelical Obedience, That our wilful and more heinous Sins when Repented of, through the Mediation of Christ, according to the Terms he has obtained for us in the Covenant of Grace, shall be forgiven us.

The Second great Difference is, That even our wilful and more heinous Sins, when by our *Repentance* we bewail and forsake 'em, and take better care to avoid 'em for the future; they also, through the *Mediation of Christ*, according to the Terms he has obtained for us in the *Covenant of Grace*, shall be forgiven us, and not prejudice our being *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Among the *Jews*, according to the strictness of *Moses's Law*, the Punishment took place upon the first wilful breach: *He that despised Moses's Law*, saith the Apostle, if it were in an instance where the Law threatned death, *died without Mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. A Man that had committed *Adultery*, or *Murder*, or any other Crime, whereof Death was the establish'd Punishment, was to die without Remedy; for no Sacrifice would be accepted for him, nor would the Law admit of any Favour or Dispensation.

But when Christ came into the World, his Business was to abrogate all the Rigour of *Moses's Law*, as well as that of the *First Covenant*, and to preach an Universal Pardon upon Repentance. Now under the Covenant of Grace, God doth not cast us off upon the commission of every Sin, but as he is heartily desirous that we should repent of it, according to that of *Ezek. 33. 11. As I live, saith the Lord, I do not delight in the death of a Sinner, but rather that he return, and live.* So when we repent, he has oblig'd Himself, by his Truth and Faithfulness, to forgive it, according to that of *St. John, Epist. 1. 9. If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins.*

Remission of Sins upon Repentance, the great Doctrine of the Gospel.

This is the great Doctrine of the Gospel, which is a Covenant of Remission of Sins upon our Repentance; and therefore our Saviour, when he began himself to preach it, he said, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Matth. 4. 17. And when he left the World, he commanded his Disciples, that they should declare to the World the Pardon of Sins upon their Repentance; for so *St. Luke* tells us, *Ch. 24. 47. that he gave 'em in charge, That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preach'd in his Name to all Nations.*

Thus has God provided us of means, which will most certainly restore us to his Favour. He has not left us in a forsaken state, but has prescribed us this Method of Repentance to recover us out of it, and to be the great Instrument of our Pardon and Reconciliation. And our Repentance, through the *Mediation of Christ*, will be accepted for our Pardon, whatever our Sins have been, whether known or unknown; whether they have been wilful or involuntary Sins.

Repentance will be accepted to our pardon, for our known or secret Sins, whether wilfully or unwilfully committed, but now forgot, though generally repented of.

2. For our most known and wilful Sins, if particularly repented of.

*First*, Our unknown, or secret Sins, which whether wilfully or unwillingly we have committed, but now we have forgot, shall be forgiven us upon our hearty, though general Prayer to God to forgive us; such as was that of *David, O cleanse me from my secret Faults, Psal. 19. 12.* and upon our diligent care hereafter, not knowingly and wilfully to transgress any of God's Laws. And,

*Secondly*, Our most unknown and wilful Sins, even they shall also be forgiven us, if for every particular Sin we know our selves to have committed, we particularly repent of it by confessing it to God, and by taking care to amend and forsake it for the future.

Till we are reclaimed indeed from our former Sins, and are become God's dutiful Sons and faithful Servants for the present, and for the future; it is not consistent with the Honour of his *Justice* and *Holiness*,

ness, with the Authority of his Laws, and with the Wisdom of his Government, to receive us into his Favour: But as soon as ever we are conscientiously reformed from our Sins, he will be reconciled to us if we are heartily sorry for what has been past, and amended for the future; and in case of Injury and Wrong done to God or Man, we undo, as much as in us lies, what has been done amiss, by making amends, and reparation for what we have injured either.

We cannot be said to repent of a Sin, unless we undo, as much as in us lies, what has been done amiss: Therefore if any one has offended his Neighbour, and given him just cause of Anger against him; he that will truly repent, and expect that God will hear his Prayers for his Pardon, must go and acknowledge his Offence, endeavour to appease his Neighbour, and be reconciled to him; for so our Saviour has ordered, *Matth. 5. 23.* before he offer his Prayer to God. And he that has injured his Neighbour, either by taking away his good Name by Slander, or his Goods by wrong Dealing, must take off the Slander, and restore what he has unjustly got; and so did good *Zacheus*, upon his Repentance, we find, *Luke 19. 8.* when he embraced the Gospel.

*And in case of Injury to Man, if Reparation be made.*

And so likewise towards the Reparation of God's Honour, I must needs add, as a necessary part of Repentance, that he who has formerly liv'd a very notorious and scandalously ill Life, to the great Dishonour of God and Religion, must now, towards the Reparation of God's Honour, be as famous for his eminent and exemplary Piety, that his Repentance may be accepted, a private Sorrow for publick Scandals falling vastly short of undoing what has been done amiss, in which consists the restitutive part of Repentance. The necessity of this, we have exemplified in the case of the Woman who washed our Saviour's Feet with her Tears, and wiped them with the Hair of her Head, *Luke 7. 44.* She had formerly, it seems, been a very vile Woman; but the reason why her Sins, which were many, were forgiven, is said by our Saviour to have been, because she loved much, *verf. 47.* And thus if we do repent, our Sins shall not be imputed to us; but through the Merits of Christ's Death, and the Grace of the Gospel, they shall be looked upon as if they had never been.

*Of high Dishonour to God and Religion, if that be not repaired by an eminent Repentance.*

And thus I have shewed you that other great Difference betwixt that Obedience required now under the Covenant of Grace, and the Obedience required by the First Covenant; That, whereas the Obedience required by the First, was a Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience, the never Offending at all. Now not only our involuntary Sins and Infirmities; but also our most voluntary and wilful Transgressions, when by Repentance we bewail and forsake them, and take better care to avoid them for the future; they also, through the Mediation of Christ, according to the Terms he has obtained for us in the Covenant of Grace, shall be forgiven us, and not prejudice our being Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And upon the whole, I have now shewed you, as to all that Obedience required now under the Gospel, to make us Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; that there is not required indeed, a Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience, the never offending in any one part, which was the indispensable Condition of the First Co-

*The sum of Evangelical Obedience.*



venant; but there must be a Sincere and Entire Obedience paid to all the Laws of the Gospel: Sincere it must be, by being a true and undissembled Service, Obeying 'em not only because most for our Health and Interest, as generally the Laws of Religion are; but even where they are contrary to our Inclinations and Interest, because God commands us. And entire it must be, by being the Obedience of the whole Man, of our Understanding, our Wills, our Affections, and our Actions, to the whole Law of God, and that at all times. And this if we endeavour the best we can to do, that our unwilling and involuntary Failings, which through Ignorance and Frailty we commit, shall, upon our Prayers to God, be forgiven us; and that our wilful Transgressions, when we repent of, and forsake 'em, through the Mediation of Christ, and the Grace of the Gospel, shall not be imputed to our Condemnation.

The sum also thereof, according to Dr. Hammond.

In a word ; That Obedience (to speak also in the Words of the Learned Dr. Hammond) which is the Condition of the Second Covenant, and of our being made *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*: Negatively it is not a Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience, the never offending at all in any kind of Sin, (this is the Condition of the First Covenant.) Nor, secondly, is it never to have committed any deliberate Sin in the former course of our Lives. Nor, thirdly, never to have gone on, or continued in any habitual or customary Sin for the time past : But it is positively the *New Creature*, or Renewed, Sincere, Honest, Faithful Obedience to the whole Gospel, giving up the whole Heart unto Christ, the performing of that which God enables us to perform, and bewailing our *Infirmities*, and Frailties, and Sins, both of the past and present Life, and beseeching God's Pardon in Christ for all such, and sincerely labouring to mortify every Sin, and to perform an uniform Obedience to God, and from every falling arising by Repentance. And thus, if we Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and Walk in the same all the Days of our Life, we shall not fail to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*.

And thus I have fully explained to you all the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, both on God's part and on ours; both what it is to be a Member, &c. and which are the Mercies and Favours made over to us therein on God's part; and what it is to Renounce the Devil, &c. which are the Conditions to be performed on ours.

My next Task must be, and then I shall give you a full account of all that pertains to the Nature and Substance of the Covenant of Grace; to shew you, what a happy state of Salvation this is, to be in such a gracious Covenant with G O D; By whose Mediation we obtained it; By whom and how we are called into it: And lastly, what infinite Thanks we owe to God for Calling us into this state of Salvation: All which Points we have taught us in these Words: *And I thank God our heavenly Father, that*

be hath called me to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Sa-  
 viour; that there is not required obedience; the never offending in any  
 one part; which was the indispensable Condition of the first Co-  
 venant.



## T H E XXIV. Lecture.

**And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath Called me to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.**

**I** Have already, in order to a full Explication of all that pertains to the nature of the Covenant of Grace, given you an account of the Terms and Conditions of it, both on God's part, and on ours, as they are laid down and taught you in your Church-Catechism.

The Invaluable Privileges on God's part, made over to you therein, as you are taught in your Catechism, and I have explained 'em to you are, first, That you are therein made *Members of Christ*; secondly, *Children of God*; and, thirdly, *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And those Conditions to be performed by us, our part of the Covenant, are, That we should, first, *Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*. Secondly, *That we should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith*. And, Thirdly, *That we should keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our Life*. And what each several Article in this your gracious Covenant doth mean and import, I have hitherto (according to the best of my Skill) been explaining to you.

And now, if there be any thing farther necessary to a full and compleat Explication of the Nature of this Covenant, it must be this, in the second place, to shew you, *How that thereby you are restored to a State of Salvation*: Thirdly, By whose Mediation you obtained so gracious a Covenant, and are put thereby into a state of Salvation; *It was through Jesus Christ our Saviour*. Fourthly, By whom and how we have been Called to this state of Salvation; *It was our Heavenly Father, who hath called us to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour*. And, lastly, What infinite reason you have heartily to thank Almighty God our Heavenly Father, that he hath Called you to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath Called me to this State, &c.**

And

And as all these Points are fairly taught you in these Words of your Catechism; so in commenting upon these, I will, by God's Assistance, open and explain these several Points to you. To proceed therefore, in order to a more compleat understanding of the whole Nature of the Covenant of Grace, let us see,

*That in the Covenant of Grace, we are restored to a state of Salvation.*

Secondly, How this Covenant, whose Terms and Conditions I have been explaining to you, does restore us to a state of Salvation. Salvation does import a deliverance from Danger or Misery; and a State of Salvation does import the being put into a Condition of Safety, where one may be safe and secure from Danger and Misery, if he please. For our understanding therefore, how this Covenant of Grace is a means of restoring us to a State of Salvation, we must look back and consider, how we brought our selves into a State of Danger and Misery before; and how by the Covenant of Grace we are put again into a State of Safety and Security, if we please.

*How we brought our selves into a state of Misery before.*

And to this purpose we must know, That God Almighty created Man at first in such a state of Perfection, with such an enlightened Mind, such a regular Will to the Laws of right Reason, and with such obedient Appetites and Affections, that he might, if he would, have continued in perfect Innocency: And now making him thus upright, and capable to perform such an Obedience, God did very reasonably make this Covenant with Man, That he should perform a *Perfect, Exact, Unsinning Obedience*, and live for ever. But upon the least Sin, the eating of the Fruit of one Forbidden Tree, he should surely die. The Event of which Proceeding was, that Man hearkning to the Suggestions of the Devil, did thereby rebel against his Maker, take part with Satan, and so did forfeit all his Right and Hopes of Happiness; which upon the faithful Performance of his Covenant he would have had, was shut out of Paradise, and condemned to death, as you will see largely described in the third Chapter of *Genesis*. Thus did Man, by the breach of his Covenant with God, bring himself into a state of Danger and extreme Misery.

*How by the Covenant of Grace we are put into a state of Security, if we please.*

And now here it comes in for us to consider the Second Covenant, as that which restores us to a state of Salvation. Had the First remained uncanceled, and in full force, we must have all perished without remedy, upon a double account: It required an unsinning Obedience, and we had sinned: It allowed no place for Repentance after Sin, and yet we had brought our selves into that State, that *except we should repent, and our Repentance be accepted, we must all undoubtedly have perished*. We were unavoidably therefore bound up by that First Covenant, as the case then stood with us, to Death and Misery; and it was not possible for the Wit of Man to contrive any way to escape it.

And now when we were in this irreparable State, was God of his own Goodness graciously pleased to cancel the First Covenant, blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the Cross of Christ, Col. 2. 14. By which place is more immediately meant, I must confess, his cancelling and making void, as to any condemning Power in it, the Covenant of Works made with the *Israelites* by the hand of Moses; but not so as to exclude his cancelling all former Covenants that were too rigorous and impossible for Man in his fallen State to perform.

form. I conclude therefore, that God was graciously pleaſed to *cancel* and make void the *First Covenant*, under which Man was created, and which he was incapable of performing and receiving Benefit by, having forfeited that perfect Light, and perfect Strength, which ſhould enable him to perform it, and become very defective and weak both in Knowledge and Ability of performing his Duty towards his Creator. And he was pleaſed to grant unto us, and to eſtabliſh with us a *Second*, by way of Remedy againſt the Rigour and Extremity of the *First*; wherein God, as it were, deſcending from his Majeſty and Glory, does oblige himſelf to make good to ſuch, as ſhall enter into it, and continue faithful therein, thoſe inſtimable Favours and Benefits which do vaſtly exceed thoſe of the former. For, in the firſt place, whereas the *First Covenant* did not (as far as I can find in Scripture) any where *Expreſſly* promiſe Eternal Life in Heaven, to thoſe that were faithful in it: The *Covenant of Grace*, whereunto you are called, does, in innumerable places, propoſe immortal Life and Happineſs, to all thoſe that do *Believe* its Doctrines and Articles, and do ſincerely Obey its Precepts, as has been ſhewed you; for it is *Jeſus Chriſt who hath brought Life and Immortality to light, through the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. And then, ſecondly, whereas under the *First*, there was no place for Repentance; but nothing leſs than an Exact and Unſinning Obedience, was the Condition of this Life and Happineſs: And upon the firſt and leaſt Offence, all was become forfeit and loſt. Herein we have this relaxation of Rigour, and exceeding Favour, That even the greateſt Sinners, upon their Repentance and Return to God, ſhould be ſaved; and our Saviour therefore left Commiſſion with his Diſciples, That *Pardon and Remiſſion of Sins ſhould be preach'd in his Name, amongſt all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. Thus, in the *Covenant of Grace*, is Repentance, like a Plank thrown out, which if Ship-wreck'd Sinners lay hold on, they may ſave themſelves; and the *Covenant* it ſelf like a Ship, like *Noah's Ark*, whereinto thoſe that enter, and will continue in it, may be landed ſafe in the Kingdom of Heaven. So that the *Covenant of Grace*, in whoſe Terms and Conditions you have been lately inſtructed, does reſtore us you ſee into a ſtate of Salvation, whereby we are put again into a ſtate of Safety and Security, if we pleaſe.

And now, *Thirdly*, it will be infinitely worth our Enquiry, by whoſe *Mediation* we obtained ſuch a *Covenant of Grace*, and were reſtored thereby into a ſtate of Salvation. And it was *through Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour*. You have ſeen how wretchedly Man did break his *Covenant* with his Maker, and into what a miſerable ſtate he plung'd himſelf thereby.

*That by the Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt it was, that we obtained ſuch a gracious Covenant, whereby we are reſtored to a ſtate of Salvation.*

And now behold the unſpeakable Goodneſs of God the Father Almighty, declared in Jeſus Chriſt his Son! When God's Juſtice required, that Sin ſhould be puniſh'd; when his Holineſs forbad, that a thing ſo contrary to his Nature, and hateful unto him, as Sin is, ſhould eſcape the ſevereſt Marks of his Diſpleaſure, and when his Wiſdom would not ſuffer it to eſcape Punishment, leſt his Creatures ſhould take occaſion from thence to rebell the more againſt him; when for theſe Reaſons it was neceſſary that the Sin of Man ſhould be moſt ſeverely puniſh'd; then did Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God interpoſe Him-



self betwixt Vengeance and us, and did mediate and intercede with his Father, to pardon and forgive us the Breach of our Covenant, he laying down his own Life a Ransom for our Sins, to redeem us from Misery, and paying his own Blood a Satisfaction for our Offences: This we have taught us, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *There is one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all.* And, moreover, because having fallen from our Uprightness, and lost that perfect Light and Strength, whereby in a state of Innocence we had been able to perform a perfect, exact, and unfinning Obedience, the Conditions of the First Covenant; because this we were no longer able to do; and therefore so long as we remained bound to perform the First Covenant, we must have been however lost; Jesus Christ did therefore, I say, moreover mediate and intercede with his Father in our behalf, and purchasing the Grace and Favour with his precious Blood, did obtain for us a better Covenant, a Second and more gracious Covenant, instead of the First, which was more rigorous; a Covenant consisting of such Conditions, as by his Grace we shall be enabled to perform, and of far better Promises to encourage our Endeavours and Performances; for which reason he is therefore styled the *Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises*, Heb. 8. 6.

In particular, He did obtain these infinitely happy Terms and Conditions for us (as has been already shewn you) that if we would renounce God's Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and return to our Obedience (which is in other Words to repent) we should be accounted as *his Children*, and have all our former Rebellions pardoned us: That if we will firmly and practically *Believe* in God, and in Jesus Christ, who died and suffered for us, we should be *Members of his Body, the C H U R C H*, and partake of all those manifold Graces and Privileges he has purchas'd for it. And, lastly, if instead of a perfect, exact, unfinning Obedience, we would but perform a *Sincere* and *Honest* one, such as, by the Grace he would afford us, we should be enabled to, we should finally be made *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*. Thus did Jesus Christ mediate and intercede with God the Father for our pardon, upon the Breach of the First Covenant, paying down his own Life a Satisfaction for the Injustice done by us to God, in violating of it, and did purchase and procure of God the Father, to be reconciled to us upon easier Terms, such as those in the Covenant of Grace now mentioned.

And now let us behold here, and admire the Infinite Wisdom also, as well as Goodness, in this Method of our Redemption, through and by the Mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Was it necessary, as a due Reparation of God's Honour, that the Divine Justice must be satisfied for the Breach of the First Covenant? Who then could be sufficient for so vast an Undertaking, except the Son of God, who is God Himself! The Sufferings of such a Person, as a Satisfaction to the Divine Justice, could alone fully proclaim the infinite Guilt of Sin; and, How extremely God was incensed against it, and could alone sufficiently pacify and atone the Divine Anger thereupon! Was it, again, on the other side, requisite to Man's Restoration, that a Covenant should be obtained of such Conditions, as we in our state of Weakness might be capable of performing? Who then was so proper to propose to, and

and obtain of the Father such gracious Terms for us, as one who was himself Man, and so could be sensible of all the Weakness and Infirmities of Man, Sin excepted, and had experienced himself what was in the Power of Man to perform?

Why, all this does of it self appear to have been considered in the Divine Wisdom, and in the Contrivance of Man's Recovery to a state of Salvation, through the Mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour; but for our better assurance, the Author to the *Hebrews* does expressly declare it to have been so, *Heb. 2. 17, 18.* telling us, That since he had undertaking to mediate a Peace for us with God, that *therefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in Things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People: For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* By being God, he was qualified to be a *faithful High Priest in Things pertaining to God, and to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People:* That is, as God alone, he knew what Satisfaction was sufficient to be offered to God, and was fit for him to accept, ere he would be reconciled to Sinners; and by being Man, he was also qualified *to be a merciful High Priest; for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted:* That is, as Man, who is sensible what Temptations and Infirmities we lie under, he was more proper to be entrusted with the Appointment of such Terms and Conditions as Man was capable to perform; and therefore did prescribe us a Covenant of Grace, consisting accordingly of such reasonable and performable Conditions.

And thus you see also by whose Mediation we obtained such a Covenant of Grace, such a state of Salvation; *viz.* that it was *through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

And now, *Fourthly*, let us consider, as you are also taught in your Catechism, by whom, and how you are called to this state of Salvation. And truly, the same Heavenly Father who granted us, and the same Jesus Christ our Saviour, who purchased this state of Salvation for us, have also most mercifully called us to it.

And behold and consider, first, I beseech you, what infinite Care our Heavenly Father hath taken in this great Affair, to call us to this state of Salvation. *And we have seen, and do testify, says St. John, that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World, 1 Epist. 4. 14.* And how hath he sent him to save it? Why (as was long before prophesied, *Isai. 61. 1.*) He put the Spirit of the Lord upon him to preach the Gospel to the Poor; he sent him to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of Sight to the Blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord, *Luke 4. 18, 19.* Such was the very earnest Care of the Father, that he Commissioned, and sent his own Son to enquire us, his rebellious Creatures and Subjects, to lay down our rebellious Arms against him, and to embrace those Overtures and Conditions of Mercy and Salvation, that he offered to us by the Preaching of the Gospel.

*The infinite Care of God the Father to call us into it.*

Not

The Ever-blessed Son of God  
no less intent  
upon this blessed Work.

Nor was the Ever-blessed Son of God less intent upon this Blessed Work, than the Father: No sure; it was his *Meat to do the Will of Him that sent him, and to finish his Work*, John 4. 34. It was his Meat and Drink to save Men's Souls; and therefore *He went about doing good*, Acts 10. 38. Doing good; that is, executing that Office to which the Father had authorized him, in order to the Salvation of Men; that Office of Mercy, instructing and calling of the World to Repentance; and; in order to that, winning 'em to it by other Works of bodily Charity, with which carnal Men are most taken, as Curing their Diseases, *Casting out Devils by the Power of him who was present with him*. He went about doing good of all kinds, but all in order to the good of Men's Souls; and he was zealous also, to the highest degree, in this blessed Work.

How mightily  
be importuned  
us to come in  
to this state  
of Salvation.

For, good God! with what mighty Importunity, and winning Rhetorick, did he, the Son of GOD, address himself to his own foolish Rebellious Subjects, to come into this state, and to receive freely the Means of Salvation! *Ho, every one that thirsteth, cries he, (as the Evangelical Prophet represents him bespeaking the World, Isai. 55. 1, 2, 3.) come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price. Wherefore do ye spend Money for that which is not Bread? and your Labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your Soul delight it self in fatness. Encline your Ear, and come unto me; hear, and your Soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David.* It is not to be expressed nor imagined, with what mighty Zeal and Persuasion he did himself, whilst on Earth, pursue this blessed Work of our Salvation.

He has left a  
succession of  
Ministers be-  
hind him to do  
the like.

Nor was he contented himself, whilst on Earth, thus to call us in to this State of Salvation; but, moreover, when he was to leave the World, he provided a Succession of Ministers, which he has left behind him, to continue to the end of the World, to do the same good Office under him, for the Salvation of Mankind, empowering them with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, to enable 'em to do it effectually: *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you*, John 20. 21. And accordingly has he committed it to our care, as he made it his own, to Preach the Gospel to Mankind, to make known the Love of God, as manifested in Christ to the World, to receive those that believe into the Covenant of Grace and Society of Christians by Baptism, and by this means to call you into a state of Salvation.

And as he hath committed to us the Word of Reconciliation, we therefore as the Ambassadors for Christ, and as though God did beseech you by us, we do pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. We are perpetually preaching and declaring this *Εὐαγγέλιον*, this good Tidings to you; we instruct you in the Nature of that Salvation which is wrought for you, we direct you to the means of attaining it; and, with all the powerful Motives drawn from the Word of GOD, we do all we can to move you to seek this Salvation in the way that Infinite Wisdom has appointed for the attaining of it.

And



And what, I beseech you, can be done more? What can be done to call you into a *State of Salvation*, if this will not? When God our Heavenly Father, when Jesus Christ his Son, when his Holy Spirit by his good Inspirations, when his *Apostles, Evangelists*, and a whole Succession of Pastors and Teachers since, do spend so much Care upon this one Work; What can be done more to save you? Nay, *What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* Will God most justly expostulate with us, as he did with the Jewish Church, *Isai. 5. 4.* which brings me to the

Last thing which was to be spoke to in the Explication of these Words I am now upon; viz. what infinite reason we have *Heartily to Thank Almighty God our Heavenly Father, that He hath Called us to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

And indeed it is a matter that infinitely deserves the deepest Sense, and utmost Acknowledgements of the Divine Goodness to us, whether we consider barely the Advantages of having GOD in Covenant with us, or our own singular Happiness of being called into it.

And, *First*, As to the extraordinary Advantage it is to have GOD in Covenant with us (which I have frequent occasion in this Argument to mind you off) and consequently that it affords great matter of our Praise and Thanksgivings to Him upon that account; it is worthy your notice, that in this case, GOD does condescend, even to oblige Himself by Contract and Agreement with us, whom he might oblige to Obedience by his mere Authority, without any Assurance of Reward, that, if we will but do our part, Repent, Believe, and Obey, he will be even bound in Justice, having given his solemn Word and Promise for it, to conferr upon us the richest Blessings that Heaven and Earth can bestow, viz. Pardon of Sins, and Eternal Life and Happiness.

*This great matter of Thankfulness, whether we consider, 1. The extraordinary Advantage of having God in Covenant with us.*

Alas! if we were left to build our Hopes meerly upon the Merit of our own Righteousness and Vertue, we could none of us have the least Expectations of obtaining, as the Reward thereof, such unspeakable Blessings as are now laid up in Heaven for us: But GOD condescending by Covenant to engage himself to make 'em good to us, we have thereby the fullest Assurance given us, that we shall obtain those Blessings; and upon that Assurance, the strongest Consolations and Comforts also, to cheer us in going through the Difficulties we shall meet with in performing those Conditions, whereby only we shall obtain such unspeakable Blessings.

By having GOD in Covenant with us, I say, we have the greatest Assurance possible, that we shall obtain his Favours: To which purpose, those Words of St. Paul are very remarkable, *Gal. 3. 15, 16.* Brethren, says he, *I speak after the manner of Men, tho' it be but a Man's Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no Man disannulleth or addeth thereto; now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises* (that is, the Covenant) *made: Which Words do import, that the deceitful Man will scarcely fail to perform, what he has once obliged himself by Covenant to do, it is impossible that the God of Truth should fail to make good to the utmost, those Blessings he has ensured to Abraham and his Seed; that is, to all whom he has vouchsafed to enter into Covenant withal.*

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And such Assurance given by GOD, does yield also the strongest Consolations and Comfort. For why? If you'll compare one Scripture with another, you will find, that that which (*Gen. 17. 2.*) GOD does call his Covenant, (*Heb. 6. 13.*) is called his Promise upon Oath. And what says the Apostle in that case? Why, GOD, says he, *vers. 17, 18, 19, 20. willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise, the Immutability of his Council, confirmed it by Oath, or by Covenant, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us; which Hope we have, as an Anchor of the Soul, sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the Veil, whither the FORE-RUNNER is for us entred, even Jesus.* That is, GOD having ascertained to us his Blessings, by Promise upon Oath, or which is tantamount by Covenant, we cannot upon such Assurance but have the greatest Comfort and Hopes of obtaining those Blessings, and so of following, ere long, that Jesus which is gone before us into Heaven, to prepare a Place for us; that where he is, there we may be also, *[John 14. 2, 3.]* So that it is an invaluable Privilege, this, of which the World can never be sufficiently sensible, nor thankful to God for, that he vouchsafed to ensure his Mercies to 'em by Covenant. But,

Or, 2. Our singular Happiness therein, above the fallen Angels, or the rest of Mankind.

Secondly, The occasion of your Thankfulness is yet greater, if you consider your own singular Happiness, in being called into this Covenant of Grace, and in having all God's Mercies thereby secured to you, when so many millions of his Creatures do want this Favour. The Words of your Catechism do teach every one of you to consider his own particular Interest in this Covenant, as the proper matter of his Thanksgiving to God: Every one of you is taught to answer for himself in particular, *I thank God our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* And indeed, if we are naturally most affected with, and most sensible of those Benefits, which we see so many besides our selves to want, here is occasion for the deepest Sense, and utmost Acknowledgments of GOD's Goodness to you, that you have been called into this *State of Salvation*, when so many millions besides, both Angels and Men, do want the Benefit of it.

As to the fallen Angels, the Covenant of Graces was a Favour never afforded by God to them; for Christ, that he might deliver them who all their life-time were subject to Bondage, verily took not on him the Nature of Angels, but took upon him the Seed of Abraham, *Heb. 2. 15, 16.*

And as to Mens, alas! there are many Nations now in the World, who have not yet enjoyed so infinite a Blessing, as this happy Call into a *State of Salvation*; who have not yet heard of a Saviour, nor the good Tidings of the Gospel, or Covenant of Grace; who have had no Apostles, no Evangelists, no Pastors nor Teachers amongst 'em, and who therefore still lie groping in Darkness, and the shadow of Death. And perhaps amongst those Nations that are called, there are not any that enjoy the Means of Salvation, the Worship of GOD, the Administration of Sacraments, and the Preaching of the Word, in that purity and force, as we in this Church and Nation do. It is indeed

indeed an unspeakable Blessing we enjoy above many other People : *For now in Jesus Christ, we who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ, who is our Peace, Ephes. 2. 13, 14. And are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, vers. 19.*

It is counted a great Privilege amongst Men but to enjoy the Freedom of a City, or Corporation, as that which puts those who enjoy it, above the Condition of Strangers, and gives 'em to partake of many singular Advantages which Foreigners want: But by being taken as *Fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and of the Household of God, into Covenant with him, we are Enfranchised Citizens of the New Jerusalem,* whereby we are entituled to all those Privileges which Christ has purchased for us, which are unspeakable and invaluable, and which does place us, as has been often said, in so much a better State and Condition than the rest of Mankind. Such infinite reason have we *heartily to Thank Almighty God our Heavenly Father, that he hath Called us to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

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## THE XXV. Lecture.

### In my Baptism, wherein I was made.

**A**S to what concerns the Nature and Substance of the *Covenant of Grace*, I have already opened and declared to you : I have shewed, First, What are its Terms: Secondly, That it restores us to a *State of Salvation*: Thirdly, By whose Mediation we obtained so gracious a *Covenant*, and were restored thereby into a *state of Salvation*: Fourthly, By whom we have been Called into it: And, Lastly, What mighty Thanks we do owe unto God, that we have been called into so gracious a *Covenant*, and happy state of *Salvation*.

My next Business must be, to treat upon the *Sacrament*, or *Solemnity*, by which you Entered therein: For the declaring whereof, and the full Explication of these Words, *In my Baptism, wherein I was made*, it will be requisite,

That I should, in some measure, (so far as relates to the Sealing of the *Covenant of Grace*) open unto you the Nature and End of *Baptism*.

And not to give you now a full and particular account of the whole Nature, and Meaning, and End of *Baptism*, which shall be more conveniently done, when we come to the latter part of your *Catechism*, where the whole Doctrine of that, and the other *Sacrament*, is taught you; it may suffice to our present purpose to tell you, That

*Baptism* is an outward Rite, or Ceremony, of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the solemn Admitting of Persons into the *Covenant of Grace*; Instituted by Christ for the better Confirmation and Assurance of its Terms; the Promises on GOD's Part, and Conditions on ours, it being thus mutually Seal'd to, betwixt GOD and us.

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Rite of our Sa-  
viour's own  
Appointment,  
for the solemn  
Admission of  
Persons into  
the Covenant  
of Grace.

First, *Baptism*, I say, is an Outward Rite, or Ceremony, of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the solemn Admitting of Persons into the *Covenant of Grace*.

Although

Although the Service prescribed us in the *New Covenant*, be a spiritual Service, according to that of *St. John*, chap. 4. 23, 24. *But the Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth*; although the Gospel, I say, be a spiritual Service, opposite to that Outward and Ritual Service, that was Instituted in the Law; in respect of which, it was called, *Heb. 7. 16. The Law of a carnal Commandment*; yet however it pleased Almighty God, to Institute some very few Outward Rites and Ceremonies, by which Believers, as by certain Visible Signs, should be obliged to that Service and Obedience due unto God on their part, and by which even God Himself would Seal, as with his Royal Signet, the Favours and Promises to be made good on his part; that so those Outward Solemnities might be express Marks of that mutual Agreement betwixt God and Man.

And indeed since such is the Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature, that nothing enters into our Minds, but through the Door of our Senses; and that which does strike our bodily Senses, does make the deepest and most lasting Impression upon us; since indeed it is so with us, it was very agreeable with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to have that Respect to our Make and Nature in his Treatment with us, as at the same time he threw away the many burdensome Ceremonies of the Law, to retain so many, and such at least, as whereby we might be made more sensible of our Engagements to God; and be the better assured of his gracious Promises unto us. And therefore since all Men, in their Covenants one with another, ever used some Outward and Express Solemnities of Signing and Sealing, for the better Assurance of the Performance of Promises on both sides; it was no ways disagreeable to the Wisdom of our Saviour in so appointing it, nor with the spiritual Nature of the *Covenant of Grace*, that we should transact it with God in such a way and manner, as might make us more deeply sensible of our Obligations by it, and more full of Hopes of Benefit and Advantages from it.

It was truly well observed by the Father, *That Men can be associated together in no Religion, whether true or false, unless they be combined by the common Tie of some sensible Signs and Sacraments of their Profession*. For this reason, it is like, that a Visible Sign, or Sacrament, might be a continual and apparent Remembrance to 'em, and put 'em in Mind of that Profession they took upon 'em by that Rite; and that it might be a Visible Testimony and Witness against 'em, if they should ever act contrary to that Profession. Hence therefore all the Religions we hear of in the World, have had their solemn Rites of *Initiation* or *Admission* into 'em.

The *Israelites*, they were initiated into the Covenant God made with them, by the Ceremony of *Circumcision*, which is therefore called by a Figure or Form of Speech, very usual in the mention of Sacraments (where the Sign is often put for the Thing signified) the *Covenant in their Flesh*, *Gen. 17. 13.* it being the Sign in their Flesh of their Covenant with God. The *Jews* also had their Baptisms, whereby they admitted their Profelytes, or Gentile-Converts, into their Covenant; and by Baptism they say, all their Women who never were Circumcised, and both Men and Women, during their sojourning in

*To have some outward Rites and Solemnities in Religion, agreeable to the Frame and Constitution of Humane Nature, as being most apt to receive Impressions from sensible Things.*

*This especially requisite in the admission into Religious Societies and Covenants.*

*The Israelites were initiated both by Circumcision and Baptism.*

The Heathens  
were initiated  
into their My-  
steries by Pur-  
gations or  
Washings.

the Wilderness (when Circumcision was dispensed with, because it would make them sore for Travelling.) By Baptism therefore they were entred into Covenant; and this seems also to be clear from that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 2. *They were all Baptized into Moses, or Initiated into the Religion of Moses, in the Cloud, and in the Sea.* And indeed the very Heathens likewise, they were initiated into their Mysteries and Worship, by some solemn Rites or other, and that frequently by Purgations and Washings.

Our Saviour  
chose the lat-  
ter, as what  
would be acce-  
ptable to both  
Parties.

And now agreeably to both, the Rite, or Ceremony whereby our Saviour appointed that we should be Initiated into the Covenant of Grace, or the Christian Religion, was *Baptism*, or Washing. As our Blessed Saviour, out of his Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, did ordain, That agreeably to our Humane Nature, which is most sensibly touch'd with Outward Things, the Covenant betwixt him and us should be transacted by Outward and Express Solemnities; so he was not scrupulous of having it done by such Outward Rites, as were more generally known and acceptable both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Especially as  
more significa-  
tive of Chri-  
stian Purity.

*Circumcision*, the Rite of Initiation into the *Legal Covenant*, he would not adopt into the *Covenant of Grace*, because it was detestable, and had in abomination by the greatest part of the Heathen World; but *Baptism*, or Washing, none could accept against it, either *Jews* or *Gentiles*. It was used by the *Jews*, as well as *Circumcision*, to initiate their Proselytes into Covenant, as was before said; and the *Gentiles* did as often use it in a Sacramental Manner, when they were entred into any of the Heathen Mysteries of their Pagan Worship; especially when on any extraordinary Occasion they professed their Innocency, as appears from *Pilate*, the Roman Governour's so solemnly Washing his Hands, when he would declare himself clear of shedding the Innocent Blood of the Holy JESUS, *Mat. 27. 24.* And indeed, as on the account of its agreeableness to all Parties; so chiefly, no doubt, he chose it for the Sacrament of the Christian Religion, on this last score, viz. its being so significative of the Cleanness from the Pollution of Sin, of the Purity and Holiness that all Christians are to practise. As Washing purges and cleanses the Body from Dirt and Filthiness; so our Saviour chose the *Washing of Regeneration*, as the Apostle calls *Baptism*, *Tit. 3. 5.* to be the Rite or Ceremony whereby all his Disciples should be initiated or entred into his Covenant, or Religion, to signify that all his Disciples must be Pure and Holy, not polluted with the Sins and Wickednesses of the World.

And this he  
has enjoined,  
as indispensi-  
bly necessary  
to our initia-  
tion into the  
Covenant of  
Grace.

And so indispensable a Rite of our Initiation or Entrance into the Covenant of Grace did our Saviour make it, that he did not only Command his Apostles, and all the succeeding Ministers of his Church to the end of the World, to Baptize those whom they did proselyte over to his Religion, *Go, says he, Matth. 28. 19. and teach, or disciple, by Baptizing 'em, all Nations, and lo I am with you always to the end of the World.* But he excludes all others from having any Interest in his Covenant of Grace, which he vouchsafed unto us, and from having any claim to the Promises of it, who are not Entred into it by the Outward Rite and Solemnity, or Ceremony of Baptism. Thus he tells *Nicodemus*, with a *Verily, verily*; that is, with a solemn Asseveration, which amounts almost to an Oath, *That Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* The King-  
dom



dom of God, is here meant the *Church of Christ*, which is a Society of Men in Covenant with God, enjoying certain inestimable Privileges under Christ their Supreme Head; and is often in the New Testament called the *Kingdom of God*, as *Matth. 21. 31.* So that it is plain from hence, that there is no admittance to the Privileges of the Gospel, or New Covenant, which are Grace, Pardon, and Happiness; nor to the Enjoyment of those infinite Rewards in Heaven, the chief of all the Mercies of the Covenant, without being first entred into the Church by Baptism, which is the Outward Seal and Confirmation of those Mercies to us; *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And agreeably to this Doctrine of his Lord and Master, did the Great St. Peter hold Baptism so indispensibly necessary, that he ordered even those Persons, upon whom at his Preaching of the Word the Holy Ghost had fallen (which one would have thought might render Baptism unnecessary) yet he ordered even those to be Baptized withal, as you may see *Acts 10. 46, 47, 48.* Then answered Peter, *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be Baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them* (Commanded whom? why, those on whom the Holy Ghost had fallen, *vers. 44.* and) *who had received the Holy Ghost as well as he, vers. 47.* he commanded even those *to be Baptized in the Name of the Lord.* Thus is Baptism you see an Outward Rite or Ceremony of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the solemn admitting of Persons into the Covenant of Grace.

Secondly, And thus our Saviour appointed us to be entred into the Covenant of Grace, for the better Confirmation and Assurance of its Terms, the Promises on God's part, and the Conditions on ours; it being thus mutually and interchangeably, as it were, Sealed to betwixt God and us.

As in this sacred Rite of Baptism, there are two Parties concerned; God, who by his Minister, or *Ambassador* and Agent, as he is called, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* does admit the Person Baptized to Covenant, and does by him promise and engage to conferr upon him, particular Blessings and Favours; and the Party Baptized, who presents himself, or is presented by others; and does solemnly engage to Renounce GOD'S Enemies, the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, to Believe in God, and to Obey him: As there are Two Parties, I say, God and Man, thus transacting a Covenant together; so the Minister, God's Agent, his Receiving the Party, and Baptizing him in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the Sealing to it on God's part, who has promised to confirm in Heaven, what they in his Name, and by his Commission, shall bind on Earth, *Matth. 16. 19.* And the Party presenting himself, or being presented to Baptism, and therein expressly vowing to perform the fore-mentioned Conditions, and in token of that, his being washed or sprinkled with Water, is the putting to, as it were, his Seal to the Counterpart of the Covenant.

And farther, as this mutual Covenanting and Sealing, does give unto God, besides his *Right of Creation*, a farther Right by our own express Engagements, to our Obedience and Service; so to us it gives (even that which we could otherwise have, no, not the least Pretensions

*Baptism appointed the Rite of Admission into the Covenant of Grace, for the better Confirmation and Assurance of its Terms, the Promises on God's part, and the Conditions on ours, it being thus mutually and interchangeably Sealed to betwixt God and us.*

It gives great Assurance of mutual Performances barely to be in Covenant together.

to) even a *Legal Right and Title* to all the most inestimable Blessings and Favours of the Covenant.

It has been already more than once hinted, and shall here be more fully declared, how that it gives us mighty Assurance, that the Mercies of God shall certainly be conferred on us; that he has vouchsafed to engage Himself in Covenant to make 'em good unto us; and that because this way of proceeding gives us even a *Legal Right and Title* to All the most inestimable Blessings and Favours of the Covenant. For this we are to consider, that 'till such time as God has condescended to engage so and so, the utmost Services that we can pay him, cannot give us sure and certain grounds to hope for, or expect such invaluable Benefits to be conferred upon us. Though we should never so heartily repent us of our Sins, there is not that in Repentance alone, that it should be sufficient of it self to satisfy the Justice of God, and to save that infinite Dishonour we have done him by our former Violations of his sacred Laws: And though we should never so sincerely and faithfully Obey him for the future, is it possible that such unprofitable Service as ours, should merit and deserve of it self, the unspeakable and unconceivable Joys of Heaven, as a due Reward for such Obedient Service? Pardon of our manifold Sins and Offences, and eternal Joy and Happiness, I say, can never be expected merely upon any Merit there is in our Repentance and Obedience; nor at all, 'till such time as he has graciously vouchsafed, and freely condescended by Covenant, to secure such Benefits unto us, upon our serious Repentance and sincere Obedience.

But then when he has once condescended to ensure unto us by Covenant, these unspeakable Benefits, and we, on the other side, have also engaged our selves to the Performance of such Conditions; then, what our Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, could not give us reason to expect or hope for, merely upon the account of their own desert, shall however be ascertained to us by virtue of God's Covenant-Obligations, which he has laid upon himself: And Pardon and eternal Happiness shall be so far then the matter of our Hopes and Expectations, that we shall have a *Legal Claim* and Title made over to us, upon our Repentance, Faith, and Obedience to 'em; in so much that God will reckon himself (as has been before said) in Justice and Faithfulness bound, both upon the account of Christ's Purchase, and his own Covenanted Promises, to *forgive us our Sins*, as you may see, 1 *Joh. 1. 9.* and will then own us to have a *Right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14. We shall then, I say, have a Right and Title to the Blessings of the Covenant, not by virtue of any Outward Merit and Desert in our Performances, but by virtue of the Divine Promises and Engagements to those, who having solemnly entered into Covenant with him, do take care faithfully to perform the Conditions of it. So that this alone gives us mighty Assurance of the Divine Mercies, that we are entitled thereunto, by his having Covenanted them unto us; as well as he is the more entitled to our Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, because we have Covenanted to perform 'em.

But yet the more firmly to entitle, as God, to our Obedience; so us, to his Mercies; because we never take our selves to be so well ensured of the performance of Articles, as when we have 'em solemnly sealed to by both Parties; God did therefore, in compliance with our own Ways

Ways and Methods, graciously pleaſe to Seal to his part, the Promiſes; and required us to do the like to our part, the Conditions, that he might be the better ſecured of our Covenanted Performances, and we of his promiſed Mercies. And then ſince he has condeſcended to enſure unto us, not only by meer Covenant, but moreover to ſeal unto us theſe unſpeakable Benefits; and we, on the other ſide, have alſo ſacramentally ſealed to the Counter-part of the Covenant, the Conditions of it; what can there be further thought of to entitle God to our Obedience, or us to his Mercies?

And, let this ſuffice, as to the Sacrament, or Solemnity, whereby we entred into the Covenant of Grace, which was by Baptiſm. Baptiſm, as you have ſeen, is an Outward Rite or Sacrament of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the ſolemn admitting of Perſons into the Covenant of Grace, inſtituted by Chriſt for the better Confirmation and Inſurance of its Terms, the Promiſes on God's part, and the Conditions on ours; it being thus mutually ſealed to, betwixt God and us, For, agreeably to our Frame and Nature, as I have told you, which conſiſts of Bodily Senſes, as well as Spiritual Faculties, God has given us, beſides thoſe moſt rational Terms and Conditions of the Covenant Recorded in the Goſpel, being ſuch Promiſes as are becoming the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God to make, and ſuch Conditions as are highly beſitting us to perform; beſides theſe, he has appointed to us theſe Outward and Expres Solemnities we call the Sacraments, to ſeal theſe Things betwixt us. And becauſe that Baptiſm is a Rite moſt ſignificative in it ſelf, and would be moſt acceptable to all ſorts of People, *Jews and Gentiles*, he was therefore pleaſed to *Adopt* that to be the Solemnity of our Entrance into, and Sealing the Covenant with him. And this Covenant you have ſeen he would have thus mutually Sealed to betwixt Him and us, that the Obligations to Performance might be the ſtronger upon us both, to diſcharge each his part of the Covenant.

And thus having ſpoke to the Sacrament, or Solemnity, whereby we enter into Covenant, expreſſ'd in theſe Words, *In my Baptiſm*; the next thing to be ſhewed you is, the great Obligation which lies upon us to perform this our Covenant with God.

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Ways and Means, graciously leads to seal to his part, the Promises, and received us to do the like to our part, the Conditions, that he might be the better secured of our Covenant-Performance, and we of his promised Mercies. And then since he has condescended to en- gage unto us, not only by his Covenant, but moreover to seal unto us this不可言喻的 Benediction, we the other side have also solemnly sealed to the Covenant, the Conditions, the Condi- tions of it: what can there be further thought of to entice God to our Obedience, or to restrain his Mercy?

And, I think, you will say, why we are not bound to do the like to our part, the Conditions, as you have been, is an Obedient Kne or Sacrament of our Saviour's own Appointment, for the solemn administering of his Cove- nant unto us, and for the better securing of our Covenant-Performance, and for the better securing of his part, and the Condi- tions of it, the Promises on God's part, and the Condi- tions on our part.

**Quest. Dost thou then think, that thou art bound to Believe and to Do as they have Promised for thee?**

**Ans. Yes, verily.**

**I**N my Exposition of the Preliminary Questions and Answers of your Catechism, having already given you a general account, first, of the Nature of the Covenant of Grace; and, secondly, of the Sacrament whereby you did solemnly enter into it, I shall now think my self happy, if I can but convince you of the mighty Obligations that lie upon you, accordingly to perform it. And this, the Words that I have now read, do manifestly lead me to declare unto you; for (taking the *Question* and *Answer* both together) they do plainly import this Doctrine; (*viz.*)

*The vast Obligations lying upon us, both from the Mercies of God, and our Baptismal Vow, to perform the Covenant of Grace.*

*The vast Obligations upon us, from the Mercies of the Covenant, especially from our Vow in Baptism, faithfully and conscientiously to discharge their Covenant with God. And what those several Obligations are, which arise from each of these Considerations, I will, with as much clearness and force of Reason as I can, declare unto you.*

And to begin with the *Mercies of the Covenant*, there is not one Article of Grace or Favour on God's part contained therein, but if the Nature and Importance of 'em be truly considered, they do each of 'em lay inviolable Obligations upon us, faithfully and conscientiously to discharge that our Covenant.

*The Obligations thereunto, first, as Members of Christ's Church.*

*As, first, if we consider our selves as Members of Christ, or Members of the Christian Church, why there cannot be a greater Argument to keep us right in a regular, orderly Conversation, than that one Consideration should be: For to be a Member of Christ's Church, what else, I pray you, is it, but to be one of those Disciples of our Saviour, who by the Preaching of the Word, and under the Solemnity and Bond of Sacraments, are Called and Chosen out of the rest of the World, to live another sort of Life, than the World is accustomed to? To this purpose, it would be exceedingly well worth your while, to consult, and thoroughly consider, 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. where you have such Cha-*

Characters given of the Church of Christ, and the Members of it, as speak it to be a selected, separated Body of Men, who are Consecrated, as it were, to God's Service. And such Inferences are drawn from thence, concerning living at an excellent rate upon that very score, as speak the strongest Obligations upon all the Members of Christ's Church to approve themselves therefore, upon that very account, excellent Men. In the 8th. Verse immediately foregoing, the Apostle speaking of those who would not come into the Bosom and Pale of the Church, he terms them a *Disobedient People*; but coming, in the 9, 10, 11, 12. Verses, to speak of the *Members of the Church*, But ye, says he, are a *Chosen Generation*, a *Royal Priesthood*, an *Holy Nation*, a *Peculiar People*, that ye should shew forth the Praises of Him, who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light; Which in time past were not a People, but are now the People of God; which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy. 11, 12. Verses: Therefore, dearly Beloved, I beseech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from Fleishly Lusts, which war against the Soul, having your Conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as Evil-doers, they may, by your good Works which they shall behold, glorify God in the Day of Visitation. But ye are a Chosen People, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People. These are every one of 'em most distinguishing Characters, and do bespeak the Church of Christ, and all its Members, to be a Dedicated, a Consecrated sort of People, between whom and the rest of the World there is such a distinction made, on the account of such their Dedication to God's Service, as there is in the Church it self betwixt the Priesthood, who are separated to the more immediate Service of God, and the People in it. The Expressions are all of 'em borrowed from the Old Testament, and were the Characters then given to the Jewish Church: And if we will be at the pains to look back into the Mosaick Law, and see what separation and distinction they did import there, we shall the better discern to what elevated degrees of Holiness, they do signifie us of the Christian Church to have been likewise separated; and consequently to what a singular Life and Conversation we are upon that score obliged.

Ye are a Chosen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People. In all these three Expressions, he alludes to Deut. 7. 6. where of the Church of the Jews it is said, Thou art an Holy People unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath Chosen thee to be a special People unto himself, above all the People that are upon the face of the Earth. All the People of the Earth besides, were utterly estranged from God by their wicked Deeds; and to all other Impieties had added this grand one, That they had fallen into the basest Idolatry, the Worship of the very Devils, whereby they did own them to be their Sovereign Masters instead of God. But God did select those People of the Jews, from amongst all the Families of the Earth, and gave 'em such excellent Laws, and required such an exact Obedience to 'em, and such a regular Conversation from 'em, that it should raise even the Admiration of all the Nations of the Earth, who should see or hear it, Deut. 4. 5, 6, 7. You see here what Peculiarity and Distinction these Words, A Chosen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, did import

*The Jews chose from amongst the Nations of the Earth to serve God.*

in

in the Jewish Church; and the other of a Royal Priesthood did no less.

*A Royal Priesthood:* This is an allusion to *Exod. 19. 5, 6* Now therefore, if ye will obey my Voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a Peculiar Treasure unto me above all People; and ye shall be a Kingdom of Priests, and an Holy Nation. As the whole Nation of the Jews were separated from the rest of the World, peculiarly to serve the True God; so were the Order of Priesthood separated from amongst the rest of the Jews, to a greater degree of Holiness, and nearer Service to him, than the rest of the Jews; and for that reason, viz. to signify a greater Purity in them than the common Jews. Those very Outward Blemishes, which were no Impediment to the other Jews, but that they might approach God, as far as to Lay-men was permitted, were a barr to the Priests, that they could not thereupon Execute the Priestly Office: *Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever be of thy Seed in his Generations, that hath any Blemish, let him not appear to offer the Bread of his God; for whatsoever be he that hath a Blemish, he shall not approach; a blind Man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat Nose, or any thing superfluous, Levit. 21. 17, 18.* And the reason is given before, *vers. 6.* They shall be Holy unto their God, and not profane the Name of their God; for the Offerings of the Lord made by Fire, and the Bread of their God they do offer, therefore they shall be Holy. So that as much as the whole Body of the Jews were to be separated and distinguished from the rest of the World; yet the Priesthood were to be farther distinguished by a Peculiar Holiness.

Christians chose both from amongst Jews and Gentiles, to a more peculiar Holiness.

And now to bring this to our present case: Does St. Peter here, in his Character of the Church of Christ, call it a Chosen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People? Why, what does it import, but that the Members of Christ's Church must study to distinguish themselves, as much now from the Infidel part of the World, whether Jews or Gentiles, by Piety and Devotion towards God, Justice and Charity towards their Neighbour, and a subjecting of their Lusts and Appetites to right Reason; which is the great Duty to themselves? I say, Christians must as much distinguish themselves from the profane Crew of Idolatrous and Wicked Heathens, and Unbelieving Jews, by an exact and regular, and a better Life; as the Jews were to distinguish themselves from the Idolatrous and Wicked Heathens in those days, by a Ritual Holiness.

Nay, And does he call us a Royal Priesthood? Why, this he does here, and also *Rev. 1. 6.* where we are told, That Christ hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father. And what doth this import, but that we are as much to exceed both Jews and Gentiles in holy Living, as the Priests among the Jews were to excel the rest of the People in a Legal Purity and Cleanness? Christians are to shew themselves to be Kings, by their Victories over the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, over Sin and Satan; and they are to be, as it were, Priests, because they are to present their Bodies a living Sacrifice, Holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable Service, and are not to be conformed to this World, but to be transformed by the renewing of their Minds, *Rom. 12. 1, 2.* And are to offer up the Sacrifice of Praise continually, the Praises of God, *Heb. 13. 15.* They are to offer charitable



ritable Alms, which are called *an Odour of a sweet ſmell, a Sacrifice acceptable and well-pleaſing unto God*, Phil 4. 18. This is the Importance of thoſe high Expreſſions of St. Peter; and this indeed do the following Words declare: *But ye are a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, that ye ſhould ſhew forth the Praises of Him, who hath called us out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light.*

And indeed ſo much it concerns us who are *Members of Chriſt's Church*, to diſtinguiſh our ſelves from the reſt of the World by our excellent Lives, far above other People; that our Bleſſed Saviour came into the World, died, and ſuffered all thoſe ſtupendious Things recorded in the Goſpel, all on this very Deſign, To purchaſe ſuch a Body of Men, that ſhould more peculiarly and zealouſly ſerve God, and to work and perſuade us to it. Thus Tit. 2. 14. it is ſaid, *That he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and puriſe unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

And hence were all his Diſcourſes and Preachings to us, (eſpecially that moſt divine Sermon upon the Mount,) to raiſe all his Diſciples and Followers to the higheſt pitch and perfection of moral Vertue and Goodneſs: *He came not to deſtroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them*, Matth. 5. 27. That is, to enlarge and encreaſe our Duties to God and Man, and to our ſelves; to make the Obedience of the Heart, as neceſſary as that of the outward Man; to make the very Thoughts of Uncleanneſs criminal, as well as Adultery it ſelf. And, in a word, hence does he require of us his Members, that our *Light ſhould ſo ſhine before Men, that they might ſee our good Works, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven*, verſ. 16. That is, he requires that by the Eminence of all divine Graces and Vertues ſhining in our Lives, we ſhould be as a Candle ſet on an Hill to enlighten the benighted and bewildred World, ſtraying in the darkneſs of Ignorance and Errour, that they might find their way by the Brightneſs of our Examples, to Heaven and Happineſs. And by the ſavourlineſs, laſtly, of our good Converſation, he requires that we ſhould be as Salt in the World, to ſeaſon the corrupted Manners of Men. Such ſtrong Obligations lie upon us, as *Members of Chriſt's Church*, to be faithful in our Covenant, that is, to perform all due Obedience unto God.

*Secondly*, Nor is the conſideration of our being *Children of God*, leſs fruitful of good Arguments, ſhewing us thoſe vaſt Obligations lying upon us, faithfully and conſcienciouſly to diſcharge our Covenant with him. There is no relation that is, which does ſpeak more of Duty, and Duty founded upon better Reaſons, than that of a Child to his Father: A Wife owes ſome Duty and Obſervance to her Husband, becauſe *the Husband is the Head of the Wife*; a Servant to his Maſter, becauſe from him he has Proviſion; a Subject to his Prince, becauſe of Protection: But a Child owes his very Life and Being; and all that he has, is originally derived from his Parent. Eſpecially this is ſo with the Children of God, upon a double account, both that of *Creation*, and that of *Adoption*. Conſider us as the Children of God with reſpect to Creation, and not only our Life and Being, but all Things neceſſary to the ſupport and maintenance of this Being of ours, that it falls not back into Annihilation and Nothing, is wholly owing to that God, *whoſe Offspring we are*, according to that of the Apoſtle,

2. As Children of God.

Children are bound to the ſtrictest Obedience to their Parents, as owing to 'em their Being.

*Acts 17. 28. In him we live and move, and have our Being, for we are his Offspring.* But consider us who are Baptized Christians farther, as the Children of God by Adoption, and then over and above our Being, and all that belongs to it, our Well-being also both in this and a better Life, is wholly of his Gift: *For if Children of God, (as St. Paul does argue, Rom. 8. 17.) then Heirs, Heirs with God, and joint Heirs with Christ; so that if we suffer with him, we shall be also glorified together.*

Children of  
God, as owing  
both Being  
and Well-be-  
ing.

And now, if for Life and Being, and also for all that Well-being too which we have, or hope to enjoy in this, or the Life to come, we wholly and entirely depend upon God our Father; Do we not then owe to him as his Children, all the Duty, all the Obedience, and all the Diligence possible, in the discharge of such Duty and Obedience? This the very Light of Nature teaches us; but the Scripture does most expressly, upon that very score of being his Children, require of us: *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master, says God by his Prophet, Mal. 1. 6. If I then be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* And upon the same score of our being Children of God, does St. Peter most earnestly exhort us to a Renunciation of the World, and our filthy Lusts, and to a faithful and careful discharge of our Duty to God our Father: *As Obedient Children, says he, 1 Epist. 1. 14, 15. not fashioning your selves according to the former Lusts in your Ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation.* And vers. 17. *If ye call on the Father, (that is, profess your selves the Sons of your Heavenly Father) who without respect of Persons, judgeth every Man according to his Works, can see Blemishes, and will punish Faults, as well in his Children as others; if you profess your selves the Children of such a Father, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, is the Inference the same Apostle makes from this Relation, of being the Children of God.*

And indeed, except we do give up our selves sincerely and faithfully to obey God, and in all Points to discharge our Covenant with him, we are in effect not the Children of God, however Baptized, and so in Profession, but in reality are the Children of the Devil, and from him must expect our Reward: So St. John assures us, 1 Epist. 3. 8, 9. *He that committeth Sin, is of the Devil; that is, he that committeth any act of known Sin, is in that, so far from being a Child of God, that he is a Child of the Devil, of whom, and not of God, he is an Imitator; For whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God: That is, as the Learned Hammond does Paraphrase upon the same place, whosoever is a true Child of God, keeps himself strictly from every deliberate Act of Sin; and the reason is, Because that contrary Principle of Regeneration, or Sonship (from which he is said to be born of God) if that continue to have any Life or Energy in it, is utterly contrary and incompatible with Sin.* And then does follow that Characteristical distinguishing Mark he does give of a Child of God, and a Child of the Devil, shewing the grand difference between one and the other. *In this the Children of God are manifested, and the Children of the Devil, whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God, v. 10.*

In a word, to conclude this Argument also: As it is almost natural, and therefore ever expected, that Children should imitate the Life and Manners of their Parents; and if they prove dissolute, and of loose Behaviour, it does usually redound to the Parents disgrace, as generally supposed to proceed from slackness of Government; so, should we, who are Children of God, be *Covenant-Breakers*, prove lawless and dissolute Livers, it will extreamly tend to the Dishonour of our Heavenly Father, whose Name is then *hallowed* amongst Men, when we his professed Sons and Servants, do dutifully and sincerely fulfill our Engagements to Him; but, on the contrary, is then blasphemed, when we live ungodly Lives. So that this grand Favour and Privilege of being the Sons of God, is another most powerful Argument to render us faithful in our Covenant with Him. And so likewise it is,

*Thirdly*, To be an *Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven*. What restraint will it put upon a young Heir, and how careful will it make him to please his Parents, when a great Estate is like to descend upon him; but yet so, that he shall certainly be disinherited of it, except he behave himself soberly, and regularly, and dutifully to those his Parents! And if so, how infinitely more circumspect, and wary, and diligent should we all of us be, to please our Father which is in Heaven, by discharging our Covenant-Engagements to him, inasmuch as the Heavenly Inheritance is of infinite more value than an Earthly one can be.

3. As Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I shall not stand now to give you a description of that *Exceeding Weight of Glory*, and of those Vast and Immense Treasures of Happiness, which are laid up in Heaven for those who shall faithfully perform their Covenant with God; I shall only in short shew you, that such is the Nature and Constitution of the *Covenant of Grace*, that there is no Hopes nor Expectations of ever obtaining it, without a faithful discharge of all our Covenant-Engagements to God; and if so, then certainly there cannot be greater Obligations possible to the performance of 'em. And as to the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, surely one would think it were needless to prove, that the Conditions of it must be performed, or we cannot expect to inherit the Promises. This is of the Nature of all Covenants whatsoever, which consist of certain Promises and Benefits to be made good on one part, not without certain Conditions to be performed on the other. And why then should any so fondly expect *Justification* and Happiness to be conferred upon 'em, except they do *Repent heartily*, *Believe practically*, and *Obey sincerely*, the only Conditions of this Covenant, as has been often shewed? Why, sure none that look into the Gospel, and see and consider, how that all along Happiness is only promised to the Obedient, can ever expect it upon other Terms. But so it is, that a sort of *Antinomian* Hereticks do spread abroad their pestilent Doctrines, teaching that Christ by his Sacrifice and Satisfaction for us, has purchased *Justification* and Happiness, without any Conditions to be perform'd on our part; and, that what he has done will wholly excuse us from Duty and Obedience. But this is one of the most Antichristian Errors in the World, as undermining the whole design of Christ's Coming, and his Preaching the Gospel amongst us; which was to tie us up to higher Rules of Righteousness, than were before given to the Sons of Men.

Kingdom of Heaven not to be expected, but by those who are faithful in their Covenant.



Men. It was infinitely far from the Design of him, who came to save and deliver us from the Power and Dominion, as well as from the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, to do any thing that should encourage us in Sin, and render us secure when at any time we commit it. But that which Christ has done for us, amounts to this, that he has purchased, by his Blood-shedding, an Abrogation of the First Covenant, wherein was no Happiness without an Unsinning Obedience; and then has procured for us this most gracious Covenant, with these abatements of rigour, That we shall have all that unspeakable Bliss, and the *Inheritance of Heaven* conferred on us, on condition we shall repent of, and forsake our Sins, and knowingly and willingly not offend him for the future.

And a most encouraging Argument this will be to all considering and serious Persons, to make 'em faithful and diligent to perform their Covenant. No People, either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, ever before us had the like. The *Jews*, by the Law of *Moses*, or the meer Covenant of Works, had plainly and expressly the Assurances only of a temporal *Canaan*, and the Promises of a peaceable and prosperous Possession thereof, to encourage their Duty. And the poor Pagans had little Inducements to virtuous living, more than the present Tranquility of Mind, which arises from the meer exercise of Vertue; neither of 'em Considerations strong enough to bear us up against great Temptations to sin, and the difficulties in the way of our Duty. But this one Consideration of an *eternal Weight of Glory*, an Inheritance laid up in Heaven, a *Crown of Life*, infallibly ensured to those who shall *be faithful unto Death*: This is enough to encourage us in Well-doing, and to preserve us safe and innocent (as it has done thousands before us) amidst all the Persecutions of evil Men on the one hand, or the Allurements of the World on the other, withdrawing us, or frightening us into Sin; so that in the strength of the Hopes of such an Inheritance, we may be prevail'd upon, faithfully and conscientiously to discharge this our Covenant with God.

And thus you see what mighty Arguments the several Mercies of the Covenant made over to us on God's part, do yield us; and what inviolable Obligations they do all of 'em lay upon us, faithfully and conscientiously to discharge this our Covenant with God. But,

4. As having promised and vowed in our Baptism accordingly, to discharge our Covenant with God.

Fourthly and lastly, Another vast Obligation lying upon us to do the same, and which ought especially to be here considered, is, That Promise and Vow made for us in our Baptism, accordingly to discharge this our Covenant. Dost thou not think, that thou art bound to Believe and to Do as they have promised for thee? That is the Question which is ask'd you; to which you are taught to Answer, *Yes, verily*; and thereby to acknowledge the vast Obligations lying upon you, on the account of that Promise and Vow, to perform that your Covenant; and a mighty Obligation too it lays upon us, there being nothing more sacred and inviolable than a Vow made unto God, and more severely punish'd, if it be ever violated.

The matter of a Vow sometimes not a Duty 'till vowed.

A Vow in general is defined to be a solemn Promise made unto God, whereby we do in a peculiar manner engage our selves unto him to the performance of something. And there are two sorts of these Vows, which are to be distinguish'd according to the matter of which the Vow is made: For sometimes the thing which we have vowed to do, was

was not a Duty upon us, 'till such time as we made such a Vow; as when a Person does solemnly promise to God, that he will set apart such a Portion of his Time, such a Day of the Week, for the more immediate Service of God, in Fasting and Prayer; or that he will devote such a part of his Estate or Gains for pious or charitable Uses.

Secondly, again, the matter of a Vow may be what was incumbent upon us before, only the Vow is added to strengthen the Obligation:

And such is the Vow was made in our Baptism, whereby we were solemnly and in a peculiar manner Devoted and Consecrated to God's Service, and to live to his Glory; which though it was a Duty upon us before, yet now we have farther obliged our selves thereunto, having solemnly vowed so to do. Generally the matter of a Vow is of the former sort, something to which we were not obliged before; as when *Jacob* did vow to *build an House to God*, Gen. 28. 22. And of this nature are all those Lands and Possessions, over and above the Tythe, or tenth Part, which have been devoted and given by the Piety of well-disposed Persons, for the maintenance of the Ministers and the Worship of God, for the Education of Children in Schools, and the Relief of the Poor in Hospitals. Before they were devoted to pious and charitable Uses, they were so far in the Power of the Party who own'd 'em, as that he might dispose of 'em how, and to what Uses he pleased. But after a Vow is once made by our selves or Forefathers, whereby such a Part of an Estate is determinately set aside for sacred Uses, it is then a *devoted thing*.

*Sometimes antecedently incumbent upon us, and such is the matter of our Baptismal Vow.*

And I will be bold to add (and I will endeavour to prove it) that for that very reason of its having been Vowed and Devoted to God, it is one of the most provoking Sins in the World to rob God of it. This is plainly seen, in the case of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, Acts 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. These two Persons, stirr'd up at first, as is probable, with a like pious Zeal for the promotion of Religion, with many others of the first Converts to Christianity, had sold a Possession, and given it to the Church (which according to the Circumstances of those Times, was of more use than if settled upon it) but Covetousness afterwards prevailing upon their Hearts, they kept back part of the Price, and laid a share of it only at the Apostles feet, v. 3. But observe how severely *Peter* rebukes 'em for this Sacrilege: Before they had devoted it, he tells 'em they might have done what they would with it; but first to bestow it wholly on the Church, and then to keep back part of the Price of the Land, he calls this a *Lying to the Holy Ghost*, and immediately (for the terrour of other sacrilegious Invaders of Things devoted) punishes it with one of the most sudden and fearful Deaths that we find recorded, either in the Scripture, or profane Story. This Sin of with-holding or seizing of any thing once Vowed and Devoted by our selves or others to sacred Uses, is called the Sin of Sacrilege, and is spoke of, as seems by the manner of expression, Rom. 2. 22. as a Sin equalling the Guilt even of Idolatry it self.

*'Tis a provoking Sin to rob God of what has been once Vowed and Devoted to him, tho' of the former Nature.*

And nothing is more plain to be observed, than the Anger of God, even in this Life, towards those who have sacrilegiously invaded God's Portion, which has been once Vowed unto him, either by our selves, or our Forefathers, and have robbed him in his Tythes and Offerings, as he calls it a robbing of Himself, Mal. 7. 8. and threatens it with a heavy Curse, of the Execution whereof, if I had time, I could give several instances. But let

*God's Anger observable upon such occasions.*



this suffice to shew how heinous a thing it is to violate a Vow to God, even where the matter of the Vow hath been something to which there was no Obligation before such Vow.

*'Tis much more provoking to violate Vows; to perform which, were antecedently obliged by the Law of Nature.*

And will it be less provoking then, think ye, to violate those Vows, wherein by solemn Engagements, Men have promised to do that which before such Vows and Promises they were obliged to from the Law of Nature, and as a Debt due for their very Creation and Being? In this case, there is a double Obligation to perform such Vows: When that which was commanded to be done, and is necessary upon other accounts, is with all solemnity engaged to be performed, then the Vow does add to the Command, a new and farther Obligation, which will make it more criminal, and a far more heinous Sin to break such Vows. There are many of this kind recorded in the Scripture, particularly the first part of that Vow of *Jacob, Gen. 28. 21.* is of this kind; and so is our *Baptismal Vow* to perform the Covenant of Grace: We were obliged to perform all that Duty, which we therein engaged to perform, by the very Law of Nature, upon the account of our Creation, and dependence upon God, from whom, as a Fountain, we derive all the Good we already have, and hope to enjoy. But when, moreover, we come solemnly and expressly to engage our selves to the performance of such Conditions, we add strength to our former Obligations, tying 'em faster upon our selves; and in the breach of the Laws of God, we thenceforward become not only barely disobedient, but moreover faithless and *Covenant-breakers*, and shall be therefore punish'd, not only as disobedient, but also as faithless and perfidious Rebels.

Nor does it in the least lessen the Obligation, that this Vow was made by others for you in your Infancy; for not to prove to you now, which shall be done in its due place, that it is in the Power of Parents or Guardians, to oblige their Minors to the Performance of Conditions, without their own express Consent at that time, provided there shall considerable Advantages accrue to 'em thereby; it is moreover plain from Scripture, that Parents may devote their Children to the Service of God in a very peculiar manner; and therefore they had Power to devote us to the Worship of the True God, as prescribed us in the Gospel, or New Covenant; to which Covenant we shall therefore stand obliged, as much as if in our Persons we had Vowed and Engaged our selves to perform it. Of this Power in Parents we see an instance in *Samuel, 1 Sam. 1. 11.* Nor is the thing contrary to Reason, and natural Equity, the Philosopher himself affirming, that both the Parents may devote the Children whilst young, as they please, since Children at that Age are to be accounted not so much at their own, as at their Parents disposal.

*A Vow is much of the nature of an Oath, and therefore to violate it is Perjury.*

The thing is just and reasonable, and therefore it is highly criminal in us to break that Baptismal Vow. It is a sin much of the nature of Perjury, a Vow and an Oath being promiscuously used in Scripture, as *Numb. 30. 13.* one for another. And indeed as to our Baptismal Vow, since therein God is made a Witness, a Judge, and a Revenger, it is in its full importance no less than an Oath, and the violating thereof would be Perjury. He is called to, as a Witness of our Sincerity, in what we do promise, and oblige our selves thereby to do: He is appeal'd to, as a Judge of our Performance, whether we are faithful

or



or not. And as he is a God that will not be mocked, he will certainly be a Revenger, and a severe one too, if we shall falsely and perfidiously brake our Vows of *Renouncing the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, of Believing in God, and Obeying Him*; and shall, on the contrary, give our selves up to the Service of Sin and Satan, live like those that Believe not God, nor the Christian Religion, and in perfect contradiction to the Apostle's Rule, *deny not all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts*, as we are commanded, and have promised; but deny to live *Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World*. In such a case, I say, he will be a severe Revenger of our Perjury, and of our *Apostacy*; I say of our *Apostacy*; for he will then consider us not as ordinary Sinners, but as those who have in effect renounced our Religion, and will allot to us therefore not the ordinary measures of Punishment due to unbelieving *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*; but extraordinary ones, such as are due to faithless and perfidious *Renegado's*. Oh, it had been happy for us, if we had never been Baptized; if after those Vows we have therein made, to do all we can to destroy *Satan's Kingdom*, and the Power of Sin in the World, we shall fight against God by our impious and wicked Deeds, *Better it is that thou shouldst not Vow, than that thou shouldst Vow, and not pay*, Eccl. 5. 5. It is a less fault not to Vow at all, than having Vowed, not to perform; the one being but a Neglect, the other an Affront, nay, a Contempt of his Majesty, who will not suffer a scorn to be put upon himself.

What shall I say? why take therefore the Advice of the Wise Man, v. 4. *When thou vowest a Vow unto God, deferr not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in Fools; pay that which thou hast Vowed: And say resolutely with Holy David, Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments*; I have solemnly resolved, and bound my self by the most sacred Ties, which I will never break, but do now confirm; that I will carefully perform my part of the Covenant, which I find to be most just and good.

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T H E

# XXVII Lecture.

**And by God's Help so I will.**

**And I pray unto God to give me his Grace that I may continue in the same unto my Life's End.**

**I**N those several Expositions I have made upon the Words of your Catechism, I have now fully declar'd unto you, first, the general Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace; secondly, the Sacrament whereby you solemnly enter'd into it. And last Day have represented to you those vast Obligations lying upon you faithfully, and conscientiously to discharge the same. And I know nothing so fit next to be spoke of, as the Means whereby we shall be enabl'd to perform this our Covenant; and what they are, these Words I have now read do declare unto you. **And by God's, &c.**

In which you are given to to understand,

I. That in order to perform the Covenant with God, you must put on a fix'd and firm Resolution faithfully to discharge the same.

II. But a Resolution it must be, took up, not in Confidence of our own Strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance.

III. And accompany'd therefore with most earnest Prayers to God not to let us to our selves, but to be always present with us. **So I will:** These Words import the firm Resolution. **By God's Help so I will:** These shew it must be a Resolution made not in Confidence of our own Strength. **And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Life's End:** These express how necessary Prayer will be to obtain that Assistance, which alone can fortifie our Resolutions. I shall inlarge here only on the former; namely, First, *That to put on a fix'd and firm Resolution faithfully to discharge your Covenant with God, will be a great Means towards your Performance of it.* In order to make which appear,

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1. Briefly



1. I will briefly reflect upon the Nature of your Baptismal Covenant.
2. I will shew you what kind of Resolution you ought to put on to perform the same. And,
3. I will then manifest to you how much such a Holy Resolution will conduce to your Performance of it.

And, *First*, let us briefly reflect upon the Nature of our Baptismal Covenant: And the Summ of what has been said upon the Doctrine of your *Baptismal Covenant* is briefly this; namely, that in your Baptism you were Incorporated into that Holy Society of Men, which is call'd the Church of Christ, and were made your selves *Members* of it. You were *Adopted* to be his *Children*, and such as he would have a peculiar Care of, and would indulge with singular Favours. And as the Perfection of all, you had then an *Inheritance* of the Kingdom of Heaven insur'd to you, so as to have a legal Right conferr'd upon you to all those *unpeakable Joys* contain'd in that State. All these peculiar Favours you had then conferr'd upon you on God's part, on these Terms and Conditions, to be made good on yours; namely,

That you would first utterly *Renounce* those great Enemies of God, the *Devil*, the *World*, and the *Flesh*. The Devil, because he had Rebell'd against his Creator, for which he was Banish'd Heaven, and has been ever since endeavouring to withdraw Mankind to partake, and side with him in the same wicked Revolt: But you have Covenanted with God that you will utterly abhor so base a thing, as to side with so curst a Spirit, either by your own Sins, or by tempting of others to sin: And that you will be always upon your Guard against all his curst Wiles, whereby he would withdraw you into so foul an Apostacy from God. As to the *World*, because the greatest Part of Mankind have been prevail'd upon by this wicked Spirit to desert their Creator, you have Covenanted to *Renounce* their Ways, so as not to be tempted by their Examples, their Company, their Persuasions, their Threats, or their Promises, to desert also the great Captain of your Salvation Jesus Christ. And as to the Material World, that neither the Riches, the Honours, nor the Pleasures of it should allure you, nor the evil and vexatious things of it should fright you into Sin. And lastly, as to these Enemies of God and us, you did solemnly engage your selves to exercise a continual Warfare against the *Corrupt Lusts* of your sinful Nature, which are ever and anon Rebelling against the Dictates of your own Reason, and of the Holy Spirit of God. Thus in your Baptism you did Covenant to *Renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh*.

And you did on the contrary then engage, as you have seen, that you would give a hearty and ready Assent to all those Divine Truths reveal'd to you in the Scripture, and given to conduct you to Heaven; particularly, and especially that you would give an entire Credit to those Great and *Fundamental Articles of Christian Faith* contain'd in your *Creed*; and that you would so thoroughly *Believe* 'em, as to be influenc'd by 'em to the performance of the

*Third* thing you engag'd in your Baptism; and that was, that you would

would *sincerely and entirely obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your Life.*

This was that Covenant we made with God in our Baptism. It was obtain'd for us when we were under Condemnation for the breach of our first Covenant, whereby we had rebell'd against God, and took part with the Devil. For being in this miserable Condition, then did the Eternal Son of God sacrifice his own Life to make Satisfaction to the Divine Justice for our Sins; and did moreover Mediate with his Father for us, that we might be receiv'd into favour upon the Terms now mention'd. And he did not only come down from Heaven himself to *call us into this State of Salvation*, but sent also his Prophets, Apostles, and Ministers, as his Embassadors, in all Ages, to invite Mankind into it, and to *pray 'em in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God*, 2<sup>d</sup> Cor. 5. 20.

And so many of the World as have hearken'd to that *Call*, have been admitted by Baptism to those Terms of Reconciliation; and have in that Solemn Ordinance dedicated themselves to the Service of God, and have vowed to perform it, as has been now declared. To be faithful to which Vow you have all possible Obligations tying upon you; and, particularly, because you have so solemnly at your Baptism, sworn to perform it. And in order to that, since *Christian Resolution*, especially if publickly and solemnly made, will have a great force in it to preserve you from the Power of Temptation, you must therefore *stedfastly resolve* to continue faithful in your Covenant; only this you must take care of, not to resolve *so to do*, in confidence of your own Strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance, which you must therefore earnestly *pray to him for*. And that you may the better know how to form such Resolution.

*Secondly*, I am next to shew you the Nature of that Resolution, imported in these Words, **So I will**, and which will so very much conduce to the performance of your Covenant. And by *Christian Resolution* is meant a peremptory, but rational Determination of the Will to a vigorous and speedy Execution of those Vows and Promises made in Baptism, notwithstanding all Temptations to the contrary; and this publickly, declaratively, and solemnly made.

1. Resolution is a Determination of the Will. Before the Mind comes to a Resolution, there is usually some Doubtfulness and Hesitation what Course to take; but when a Person once puts on a Resolution, there is no longer *halting between God and Baal*, the Fault of the unresolved Jews, 1 Kings 18. 21. The Man is determined within himself to adhere to God. And this his Determination must be,

2. *Fix'd and peremptory*, opposite to *Fickleness and Inconstancy*. This was the Temper of the Jews, the most irresolute People in the World, who were continually changing their Gods, and their Religion, for which the Prophet upbraids 'em: *Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods? But my People have changed their Glory for that which doth not profit*, Jer. 2. 11. And a perpetual round of sinning and repenting, and of repenting and sinning again, does sadly betray the irresolute Disposition of too many Christians amongst us. But,

3. Christian

3. Christian Resolution is a *Rational Determination of the Will*; that is, It is not a *Wilfulness*, a *Stubbornness*, and an *Obstinacy*; such as makes Men without Reason; nay, and contrary to Reason, to stick unmoveable from an Opinion, or to a course of Life they have taken up in despite of all Evidence and Reason to the contrary: A Temper very far from being Christian, but proceeding from wilful Ignorance and Pride, or a sourness and sullenness of Nature. Such was that perverse Temper of the *Jews*, of whom *Jeremiah* complains, *Jer. 18. 12.* as being resolute without reason, saying, *We will walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the Imagination of his Heart.* But a Man of Resolution weighs every thing first before he fixes. And the true Method of forming a true Christian Resolution is this, The Person who does it, as our Saviour represents his Proceeding, sits down and considers on the one hand, the very great Difficulties and Temptations there are in the Christian Warfare against the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*; and moreover, that it is *better not to Vow, than to Vow and not Pay*, *Eccl. 5. 4.* Nay, and he considers his own extream Weakness, so as not to be able of himself to Encounter three so formidable Enemies as the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*. But then on the other side he considers the Glorious Rewards of those who come off Conquerors, that if he does not List himself in God's Service, by entering into, and often Renewing his Covenant with God, he will be a Bond-slave to the *Devil*, and eternally and unavoidably undone; and that *tho' of himself he is able to do nothing, yet through Christ that strengthens him he can do all things*, *Phil. 4. 13.* And as the Result of this Consideration, he does most rationally and wisely form a fixt and peremptory Resolution to *Fight the good Fight of Faith*, and Maugre all Temptations, and Hazards, or Losses, to continue a faithful Soldier and Servant of his Saviour Christ. And this, I say, is the Importance of that Parable of our Saviour, *Luke 14. 31, 32, 33.* where, under the Character of a King going to War against a powerful Enemy, considering his Danger, and providing accordingly against it, he represents how we Christians must form our Resolutions.

4. And when the Will is thus *Rationally determin'd* what course to take, then the Resolute Disciple of Christ determines to proceed to a *Vigorous Execution of his Vows and Promises*. This is a part of Resolution opposite to *Weakness* and *Faintness* of Purpose, as when Persons Wish, and would be glad to do so and so. *O that I could die the Death of the Righteous*, said *Balaam*, *Numb. 23. 10.* And also Opposite it is to that *Easiness of Disposition*, a Distemper of Mind which is very falsely, but commonly call'd Good Nature, which makes Persons ready to yield, notwithstanding their former good Purposes, to the Importunities, Persuasions, or Allurements of the next Tempter. Thus one of those easie Persons is represented, *Prov. 7. 7.* as one whom the Harlot meeting, with her much fair Speech caused him to yield; so that he went after her straitway, as an Ox goeth to the Slaughter, or as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks, *ver. 22.*

5. And the Resolute Christian, as he determines vigorously, so also *speedily* to put in execution what he has, upon mature Deliberation design'd. He does not think of putting off his Repentance till



till another Day. Nor of deferring the hearing of good Advices till another time, like *Fælix*, who when *St. Paul* reason'd to him of *Righteoufnefs, Temperance, and Judgment to come*, did shift off the *Apostle* with a go thy way for this time, when it is a more convenient Season I will call for thee, *Acts 24. 25.* On the contrary, the truly refolute Christian takes *David* for his Pattern, who having thought upon his Ways, turn'd his Feet unto God's Testimonies. And made hafte and delay'd not to keep his Commandments, *Pfal. 119. 59, 60.*

6. And he determines vigorously and speedily to betake himself to the Execution of all those Vows and Promises made in his Baptifm. The Refolute Christian makes no Exceptions of some particular Lufes, fome darling Sins; but if there be any one more than ordinary dear to him, he determines immediately to Mortifie, to Cut off that, tho' as near as his right Arm, and to pluck it out, tho' as tender as his right Eye. He is not like King *Agrippa* whom *St. Paul* almost perfwaded to be a Christian, but he is both Almost and Altogether like *St. Paul*, *Acts 26. 28, 29.* who held no Correspondence and Familiarity with any of the Enemies of God and his own Soul; but is resolv'd to abandon them all alike, to Believe every Article, and to Obey every Command.

And thus the Refolv'd Christian determines to go on uniformly in the difcharge of all his Engagements, notwithstanding all Oppofitions from the World, the Flefh, and the Devil. What mighty Difficulties they will raife him, how many Blocks they will put in his Way, and what cunning Stratagems the Devil particularly will make ufe of to divert him from his Good Purpofes, and to make him break his Covenant with God, you have already fhew'd you. But the Man of Refolution is a Man of Courage, and will not through Fearfulnefs and Cowardice give way in the Day of Battle. But with *St. Paul* is perfwaded, becaufe he is Resolved, That neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things prefent, nor Things to come, nor Heighth, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, fhall be able to feparate him from the Love of God, which is in *Chrift Jefus our Lord*, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.*

Laftly, And now to render the Christian Refolution compleat in all its Parts, you muft publickly, declaratively, and folemnly proteft it to all the World, that it is the full determination of your Heart and Mind to adhere faithfully to God againft all his Enemies, the World, the Flefh, and the Devil, that you will neither fwerve from your Faith, nor flinch from your Obedience.

Publick and Declarative this Refolution muft be upon all Juft Occafions, as when Profanefnefs and Impiety grow bold and daring; and when Sinners become Impudent and Triumphant in Immodest and Immoral Courfes. And when the Profeflion of Religion is thrown off as Ridiculous, and below Men of Senfe and Spirit. In fuch an Age as this, I fay, there is occafion given to all the faithful Servants of *Chrift*, to own and declare themselves his Difciples, and that they are not afhamed of him and his Doctrines. And with the Noble *Mattathias*, *1 Mac. 2. 19.* they muft be ready to fay, *Thou all the Nations under the Kings Dominions fhall fall, every one from the Religion of their Fathers, yet will I, and my Sons, and my Brethren, walk in the Covenant of our Fathers.* A Noble and Heroick Refo-

lution, worthy of us Christians to follow, and absolutely necessary to be put on at this time, when the Publick Affronts to God and his Religion are greater than were ever in a State professing Christianity.

And as the Resolution must be openly, and declaratively; so it must be *solemnly made*, I mean, that you who are now entering into a wicked World, must take the first Opportunity of an *Episcopal Confirmation*; and must therein the Face of the World, in the Presence of the chief Officer in the Church of Christ, the *Bishop*, and before the whole Assembly of Christians there met, you must there, I say, as is prescrib'd in the Office of Confirmation, with your own Mouth and Consent, *openly recognize*, ratify, and confirm the same Vow that was made for you in your Baptism. The Bishop will then demand of you in these Words, "Do ye here in the Presence of God, and of this Congregation, renew the solemn Promise, and Vow, that was made in your Name at your Baptism, ratifying and confirming the same in your own Persons, and acknowledging your selves bound to believe, and to do all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you. And to this Demand every one of you must audibly answer, *I do*: And such as this, it is probable might be that *good Profession* which *Timothy* had profess'd before many Witnesses, 1 Tim. 6. 12. So that thus at length you see in what consists *Holy Resolution*, the Importance of these Words, *I will*.

Thirdly, And I am now to shew you, that such Resolution, and so duty form'd as this, is a very powerful means, will go a great way towards the Performance of our Covenant with God.

And, 1. The very determining of the Will with a fix'd, and settled purpose, has a great force in it to make us put in Execution the most difficult part of our Vows and Promises. We see even in Worldly Undertakings, where the Advantages are very inconsiderable in comparison, what Difficulties Men will go through when they are once bent upon a Design; whereas, when Persons have no Will, nor Mind to do a thing, the Wheels of Action move but slowly, and their Endeavours are very faint.

For why? when Men are fully purpos'd, and are set upon a thing, then it is the Subject of their Cares, they lay all their Measures, and they muster up all their Forces to carry it on; and what is equal with all this, they provide against all Attempts that shall be laid to raine their Designs.

And if those who will be Rich, or Great, or Honourable, project a thousand ways to carry their Point, leave no Stone unturn'd, refuse no hazards, are discourag'd at no Disappointments and cross Accidents; shall not we, who have infinitely more valuable Treasures laid up for us in Heaven; who have Crowns of Glory propos'd to us if we excel in Vertue, shall we be faint, and languid in our Endeavours? What can be the reason of this, but that in the great Business of Religion, Men are not so much in earnest, so resolute, and intent, as in the pursuit of their Worldly Advantages and Satisfactions, so resolutely bent, I say, upon their Improvements in Religious Perfection; for this would go a great way towards their performance of their Covenant with God.

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Particularly to be fully resolved upon it, is absolutely necessary, to baffle, and discourage the Devil in all his Attempts upon us; whom in order to *resist*, the Apostle bids us *be stedfast*, or *resolute in the Faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. For indeed such is his Resolution to destroy Mankind; and such especially is his Pride in the Overthrow of the greatest Heroes in Christianity, that there is no Devise, nor Diligence will be wanting on his part to foil you, you especially who are devoted to God; so that you must *take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the Evil-Day, and having done all to stand, stand therefore having your Loins Girt*, says the Apostle, Eph. 6. 13. 14. which words, and manner of Expression, speak the utmost Resolution to be necessary. And that will do; for when he sees that you stand so much upon your Guard, that he can have no hopes of prevailing; to avoid the shame of a foul Defeat, he will at last leave you to the Conduct of God's Holy Spirit, and of his Holy Angels, and will no longer molest nor trouble you.

And the same Resolution is also most exceedingly necessary to subdue the Lusts of the Flesh. These are a headstrong and boisterous Enemy, and must be as resolutely dealt withal, which our Saviour does more than Intimate, when he tells us, we must *Cut off these Right-Arms*, and *Pluck out these Right Eyes of ours*, Matth. 5. 29, 30. meaning our most darling and beloved Lusts; and to *Cut off*, and *Pluck out* is quick work. And indeed, the only danger from our Lusts is, when we begin to parly with them, and hold Arguments against 'em; for in the mean time they insensibly steal into our Hearts; and get Strength within us; but a Resolute Resistance, not so much as letting 'em enter into our Thoughts, utterly defeats 'em.

And, *Lastly*, The World, especially the *wicked Men* of the World, can by no means be so successfully defeated in all their Attempts to draw you to Sin, as by your putting on serious Resolutions against all sinful Ways and Courses. Till then they will never leave you, but will be continually plying you with Insinuations, Flatteries, Perswasions, and Arguments to accompany them in their Riots; but when it once comes to that, that you can say with the Resolved Psalmist, *Pf. 119. 115. Away from me all ye that work wickedness, I will keep the Commandments of my God*, they will no longer trouble you; they will perceive you have an Aversion and Hatred to their Ways, and that will naturally separate between you, and remove them at a distance from you.

But, 2. Our Holy Resolutions are then likeliest to be firm, and will consequently prove a happy Instrument, and means of your continuing faithful in your Covenant with God, when they are Ratified and Confirm'd by some outward and express Solemnity, as at Confirmation, or at a Sacrament. For to the Inward Resolves of the Mind there will be then added the outward and express Obligation of an Oath, which the Consciences of all Mankind, not totally deprav'd by Sin, are infinitely afraid of violating. And to this purpose, it is observable, that even God himself, *Willing to shew unto the Heirs of Promise, the Immutability of his Council, confirm'd it by an Oath, that by two Immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to Lye, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge,*



*fuge, to lay hold on the Hope set before us, Hebrews 6. 17, 18.* The two immutable things here meant, were the Promise, and the Oath of God : And the bare Promise of him sure, *who could not lye* might be sufficient to give us Assurance; But even God himself, for our greater Certainty and Consolation, confirm'd what he promis'd by Oath; which shews the *Additional Obligation*, which any thing that carries in it the Nature of an Oath, has upon Mens Consciences: And therefore it will follow, that your fortifying your Resolutions at a Confirmation: wherein you solemnly ratifie, and renew your Vows to God in the Presence of his Church, who are Witnesses to the Contract that will be produc'd in Judgment against you, should you happen to violate the same: It will therefore follow, I say, that nothing can be so likely to render your Holy Resolutions stedfast, and lasting, as when they are so solemnly made. By thus solemnly confirming your Resolutions, you will give a very great Force, not only to the Dictates of your own Consciences, but to the Admonitions also of your Pastor, or any other kind Friend, who watches over you for Good, and who then can with *Moses, Deut. 26. 17, 18.* adjure you to be true to your Covenant with God in these emphatical, and weighty Expressions, *Thou hast vouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his Statutes, and to hearken to his Voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar People, as he hath promised thee, and that thou should'st keep all his Commandments.*

And thus I have fully shew'd you both the Nature of Holy, and Christian Resolution; and also how much it will conduce to the performance of your Covenant with God, if you can once bring yourselves to *Resolve* well, and especially to seal these Resolutions in a publick and solemn Ordinance. I shall but briefly here speak to the two following Particulars; viz. God's *Assistance*, and *Prayer*, as means also of enabling you to discharge the same. These are indeed together with Holy Resolution contain'd in these Words;

**And by God's help so I will.**

**And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end.**

But there will be another more proper Occasion to give a full State, and Account of those two great Points; and therefore I shall here insist upon them no farther, than is necessary to our present purpose of shewing farther the Nature of Christian Resolution, and how it must be qualify'd. To proceed then,

II. *Our Resolution to be faithful in our Covenant with God, must be made, not in Confidence of our own Strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance.* Alas, of our selves we are extremely weak, all the Powers and Faculties of our Nature being miserably corrupted and depraved by Sin, and enfeebled to all that is good: Of our selves we are not able so much as to think any thing that is good; but however we have Sufficiency of God: *And the Trust we have in God is through Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 4, 5.* for he has purchas'd sufficient Grace and Assistance for us to help us through all the Difficulties in our Christian Warfare, so that tho' we cannot promise, nor vow that we will renounce the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, believe in God, and obey him, in Confidence of our own Strength; yet in full Assurance

rance of the Help of God, we may firmly resolve with a **So I will:** For *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*, Phil. 4. 13. But then, -

III. *It is Prayer that must obtain that Help and Assistance*, you must **pray unto God to give you his Grace, that you may continue in the same unto your Lives end.**

Prayer is indeed a most Sovereign Means of obtaining Supply to all our wants; and they never return unanswered in such a manner as shall be best for us, provided we our selves are duly *qualified* with Tempers and Dispositions to approach unto the Throne of Grace; and provided also that the Matter of our Prayer be acceptable to God. But as to his Grace and Assistance, to enable us to serve, and obey him, we may be sure of never failing in such our Petitions. And therefore you may be particularly assur'd that the Prayers of the Fathers of the Church, accompany'd with **laying on of hands**, (to which there is a particular Promise of a gracious Answer,) will not return empty, when in their **Confirmation** of those amongst you, who come with sincere Intentions to perform their Covenant, they shall pray unto God to increase in you the " manifold Gifts of Grace, the Spirit " of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Wisdom and Ghostly " Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and True Godliness, and to fill " you with the Spirit of Holy Fear now and for ever: Which, and all your Prayers, that they may be successful, may God Almighty grant of his Infinite Goodness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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## THE

## XXVIII Lecture.

**And by God's Help so I will.**

**And I pray unto God to give me his Grace that I may continue in the same unto my Life's End.**

**I**N the discoursing of those Means whereby we shall perform the Covenant we have enter'd into with God; having First shew'd you, that to put on a firm and fix'd Resolution faithfully to discharge the same, will be a great means towards the performance of it.

Secondly, I am now to shew you, that it must be a Resolution took up, not in Confidence of our own Strength, but of God's Grace and Assistance. And by God's Help so I will. In order to make which appear,

1. I will briefly represent how great our own natural Weakness is; And in what necessity we do therefore stand of God's Grace and Assistance, to enable us to overcome the Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to perform our Covenant with God.

2. I will then shew you what Measures of Divine Assistance proportionably to such our Necessity, God will bestow upon us.

*The whole Nature of Man deprav'd.*

And, First, Let us take a View of our own Natural Weakness, so as to see in what necessity we do stand of God's Grace and Assistance, to enable us to overcome the Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to perform our Covenant with God. And here we are to reflect, that ever since the Fall of our first Parents, when they did break their Covenant with God, and lost their Innocence by eating of the Forbidden Fruit, and did thereby forfeit the perfect Light and Strength wherewith God had endow'd 'em at the Creation, and had deposited with 'em as a sacred Treasury for them, and their Posterity: Ever since that fatal Forfeiture then made, it must be confess'd that our whole Nature is corrupted, and all the Powers and Faculties of our



our Souls and Bodies, are ſo depraved, that every thing within us inclines us to yield to Temptations, and to ſin againſt, and to diſobey our God.

The *Light of our Underſtanding* is ever ſince become very dim to diſcern the Beauty of Holineſs, of Religion, and of Spiritual Things. *The Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern'd,* 1 Cor. 2. 14. Our *Wills* they alſo are naturally crooked and perverſe, and altogether for chuſing what pleaſes our Appetites, and our Senſes, and are very backward to Religion and Goodneſs. Our *Affections* run with ſo ſtrong a Biās towards Worldly Things, that we cannot eaſily ſet our *Affections on Things above*, as the Apoſtle commands us, *but on Things on Earth*. And laſtly, our *Luſts and Appetites* are naturally very evil, and carry us out to pleaſe our Senſes, in direct oppoſition to the Laws of God, and the Dictates of right Reaſon. Thus is our whole Nature corrupt, and every Power and Faculty thereof does incline us to yield to the Temptations of the World, the Fleſh, and Devil, and ſo to ſin againſt our God, and to break our Covenant with him. In a word, the Temptations of all ſorts, which we do often meet with to draw us into Sin, are mighty; and the Duties we are to perform in oppoſition to 'em all, are many, and ſometimes very difficult; and our own natural Strength, whereby we ſhould do all this, is very weak. We ſee, as the Apoſtle words it, *Rom. 7. 23. A Law in our Members, warring againſt the Law of our Minds, and bringing us into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in our Members*: So that if we conſider our ſelves as we are in our natural State, we have reaſon to bewail our Condition in the following Words of the Apoſtle; *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Sin*, Verſe 24.

But however, notwithſtanding this our Natural Corruption and Weakneſs, we have reaſon to take Courage, and with the ſame Apoſtle, *V. 25. to thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*. For our Bleſſed Saviour with the Price of his moſt Precious Blood, amongſt other high Benefits, has purchaſ'd that excellent Gift of ſufficient Grace and Aſſiſtance, for all that enter into the Covenant with him, to enable them to perform the Conditions of it. And as he has purchaſ'd it, ſo he does convey it to the Hearts of all ſuch, to enable them to renounce, and overcome the *World, the Fleſh, and the Devil*; to believe in God, and to obey him: So that though we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves, yet we have Sufficiency of God, to enable us both to think, and to do what is good, 2 Cor. 3. 5. And indeed we can do all things required of us through Chriſt that ſtrengthens us, Phil. 4. 13. And this brings me to my

Second Propoſal, Which was to ſhew you, what the Divine Aſſiſtance is, and what Measures of it, Proportionably to ſuch our Neceſſity, God will beſtow upon us to enable us to perform our Covenant with him.

And as to the Grace and Aſſiſtance of God, by it I do mean ſomething over and above that Reaſon and Perſwaſivenes there is in the Goſpel it ſelf to work a Change in us; whereby on the one hand, by

the proposal of infinite Rewards to Well-doing; on the other hand, by the threatening of fearful Punishments to wicked Living; the Gospel is apt of it self to prevail upon us, and to change our Natures. But by the *Grace and Assistance of God*, I do mean, I say, something over and above this, viz. *A secret Power and Efficacy of the Divine Spirit accompanying the Word into the Mind and Will, by means whereof the Gospel does the more readily and effectually work upon both, to the Renewing of 'em, and to the restoring of the Image of God in the Soul; namely, that Righteousness and Purity which we had lost by our Fall.* This I mean by the Divine Assistance.

*The Measures of it proportionable to the necessity of the Church.*

And as to the measures of this Assistance, every Member in Christ's Body, in what Station soever he be, shall have sufficient Supplies of Grace derived down from Him our Head, proportionable to his Necessities, by those means of conveying it, which Christ has appointed for that purpose: I say, every Member in Christ's Body in what Station soever he be: *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office, so we being many are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another,* Rom. 12. 4, 5. that is, there are different Members in the Church of Christ. Some are to be Governours and Teachers of others, and accordingly must be endow'd with a Spirit of Government and Gift of Teaching; and others are of a more private Capacity in the Church of Christ, whatever they be in other Respects, and their Business is to keep a Conscience void of Offence, both towards God and Man, and faithfully to discharge their Duties to God, their Neighbour, and themselves. And whatever, I say, those several Duties are, which arise from their several Stations in the Church, they shall have a competent measure of Divine Grace, enabling 'em to discharge the same. They have not a Promise of those Gifts that are necessary to the Discharge of other Persons Offices, but are destitute of those necessary for their own; that is, a private Christian, call'd to no Office in the Church, is not to expect, nor ought to pretend, to have receiv'd Gifts of Government and Teaching, in a publick Ministerial way, for *God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace in all the Churches of the Saints,* 1 Cor. 14. 33. But every Member of the Mystical Body, by keeping himself united to the Head, in such ways as has been shew'd, shall have such Graces and Assistances derived down to him from Christ, who is that Head, as are necessary and proper for him.

*Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit in the first Ages.*

And that too in such Measures and Proportions, as according to the different Times and Occasions in the Church, are wanting. Thus in the first Plantation of the Gospel, when the Work was so extraordinary, that there was need of Miracles to convince the Jews of the Insufficiency of Moses's Law: And the Gentiles of the Falshood of the Pagan Superstition, then did Christ bestow upon his Apostles, divers Extraordinary Gifts, viz. of Miracles, Prophecy, discerning of Spirits, divers kind of Tongues, and the Interpretation of Tongues, 1 Cor. 12. 10. And as to all Christians in general, as the Malice of Satan did then most violently rage against the Church, Persecuting to the Death, those who would not Renounce Christ and his Religion; So all the Christians in those Times, were very extraordinarily strengthened, no doubt, to resist such strong Temptations.

But

But now, that the Church is establish'd, and the Truth of Christianity already prov'd and Believ'd, God does assist the Ministers of Religion only with the *Ordinary Graces* of his Spirit, in the discharge of their Ministry.

*Ordinary in succeeding Times.*

And as to Lay Christians therefore, except it be when the Orthodox are call'd out into any part of the World (as sometimes they are to this day) to suffer for the Truth, they receive no other than *ordinary Assurances*.

But this both Ministers and People are sure to do, in the use of those Means which Christ has appointed in his Church for that purpose.

And yet even these ordinary Assurances, Blessed be the Infinite Mercies of God towards us therein, are *extensively* very large and diffusive, so as to reach to all the Parts and Powers of our Nature, which are Evilly Affected, Corrupted, and Deprav'd by Sin; and *Intensively* very powerful in working a blessed Change within us.

*Even the ordinary Assurances extensively very large: so as to repair all the Powers of Nature deprav'd by Sin.*

And, *First*, the Grace of God is *extensively* very diffusive and large in the Change and Reformation it works within us, in that there is no Power and Difficulty in our Natures, which by Sin is Corrupted, but by his Grace and Assistance is Renew'd. I do mean, that the Assurances which God does afford us to enable our Weakness to perform the Conditions of the Covenant, is so apply'd to us by the Goodness of God, that every Power and Faculty within us, which is render'd weak by the Corruption of our Nature, is strengthened by his Grace to perform its proper part and Duty. Are our Understandings dull to apprehend and conceive of Spiritual things as they ought? His Grace does enlighten our Understandings: Thus we read, *Luke the 24. 45.* that our Saviour *opened the Understandings of his Disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures.* And to this purpose *St. Paul, Eph. 1. 18.* did earnestly Pray, *That God would give unto 'em the Spirit of Wisdom, that the Eyes of their Understandings being enlighten'd, they might know what is the Hope of their Calling, and what are the Riches of the Glory in the Inheritance of the Saints,* Are our Wills backward in performing the Conditions of the Promises, why God by throwing good Suggestions into our Souls, and by Imprinting important Considerations upon our Minds, does persuade and bend our stubborn Wills, and by degrees, works us into a ready Compliance with the Divine Will: Thus is God said *to work in us both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure, Phil. 2. 13.* And upon this account also all our Christian Virtues are call'd, *the Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22.* Are our Affections listless and lukewarm to Spiritual things? particularly, Are they dull and heavy in our Devotions? Why the Holy Spirit helps to raise in us Holy Desires, Life, and Quickness in our Prayers: Thus the Apostle, *the Spirit helps our Infirmities, making Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God, by Inspiring 'em with such Desires and Groanings that cannot be utter'd, Rom. 8. 26, 27.* And, *Lastly*, Are our Lusts and Appetites violent to carry us out to gratify them in unlawful things? Why? *If by the Spirit of God we shall mortify the Deeds of the Body, we are Promis'd, that we shall Live, Rom. 8. 13.* which implies, that by the Grace and Assistance

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of God's Holy Spirit, we shall be able to subdue those unruly Lusts within us, and so shall live Eternally.

And Inten-  
sively very pow-  
erful to renew  
our corrupt  
Natures.

And, *Secondly*. The Divine Grace and Assistance, even in its ordinary Distributions, is *Intensively* powerful, and strong enough to Renew our Corrupt Natures. This secret Power of the Holy Spirit does not indeed so forcibly and *Irresistably* work a Change in us, as that it will be impossible to Resist this Divine Grace and Efficacy, and to render it ineffectual to our Renovation. The Grace of God may be resisted, and his Spirit may strive in vain with us, no doubt, as it did with the old World, as you may see, *Gen. 6.3.* yet, by the opening of the Heart, as it did the Heart of *Lydia*, so that it shall attend to the Word, *Acts 16.14.* by fixing of the Mind to consider, and by enlightning it to discern the Nature, Tendency, and Usefulness of things reveal'd in the Gospel: Also by sweetly disposing the Will to weigh the Importance of Divine Truths, and by giving it to taste and feel the Goodness of Spiritual Things; by these Methods it adds such a Persuasiveness in the Word of God, that the most wickedly dispos'd Persons shall be thereby Converted and chang'd into most Vertuous and Good Tempers. Hence from this powerful Concurrence and Co-operation of Grace, whereby it has an Edge given it to pierce the most stony'd, harden'd Hearts of Men, is the Word of God said, *Heb. 4.12.* To be quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints, and Marrow; and that is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intent's of the Heart.

And hence *St. Paul* speaking of the Gospel, which he preach'd unto the *Thessalonians*, *1 Epist. 1.5.* tells them, that the Gospel came not unto them in Word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost; that is, it came accompany'd not only with the Power of Miracles, as some do interpret it, but with a great internal Power and Efficacy of the Holy Spirit, working in the Hearts of those to whom it was preach'd, as others do rightly expound it. It came indeed accompany'd with both in those days, both the *Extraordinary Gifts*, and the more *Ordinary Graces* of the Holy Spirit made way for its Entrance, and Entertainment in their Hearts. And so great is the Measure of Grace afforded now under, and accompanying the preaching of the Gospel, to what was given under the Law, that the Gospel is dignify'd, *2 Cor. 3.6.* with the Title of Spirit, whereas the Law is stil'd the Letter; the Apostle making this difference betwixt 'em, that the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life. Here the Gospel is call'd by this Title of the Spirit, says a learned Commentator, because Grace is a Gift of the Spirit, and is now joined to the Gospel, which was not to the Law; which Administration of the Spirit, and annexing of it to the Word under the Gospel, gives Men the Means to attain Eternal Life; when the Law is the Occasion, and by accident the Cause of Death to 'em, in denouncing Judgment against Sinners, and yet not giving Strength to obey. And indeed, lastly, well may it be stil'd the Spirit, since so great a proportion of Grace is afforded us now under the Gospel, to work in us a Change and Reformation; and so main and principal a Means is the Grace of God of such a Change, that the whole Work of Rege-  
neration

neration is call'd, *Tit. 3. 5, 6.* the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*; and so little Efficacy is attributed barely to the preaching of the Word, in comparison of what is attributed to the Grace of God going along with it, that *St. Paul* tells the *Corinthians, 1. Epist. 3. 7.* who by preferring one Teacher above another, and dividing into Parties and Factions thereupon, seem'd to impute the whole Success to the Excellency of some Men's Preaching above others: He tells them, that *neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increase*; where the whole Success of our Preaching in rendring it effectual, he tells us, is from God's Grace, not from our Skill who preach it: So that *intensively*, it appears God's Grace is very strong, mighty, and powerful, in working a Change and Reformation in us.

To conclude then this Second Means of performing our Covenant with God: As great as our natural Weakness is since our Fall, you see we have the Grace and Assistance of God ready at hand to restore in us the Image of God, consisting in that Righteousness from which we fell by Transgression. We shall have that Grace and Assistance, I say, which is *extensively* very diffusive and large, so as to renew in us all those Powers and Faculties of our Nature, which by Sin have been deprav'd; and *intensively* very strong, mighty, and powerful in working a Change and Reformation within us. And this is a second Means whereby we shall be enabled to perform our Covenant with God.

The Third Means whereby we shall both obtain the Divine Assistance, and be thereby enabled to discharge our Covenant, is Prayer unto God to give us his Grace, that we may continue faithful in our Covenant unto our Live's End. But of the Efficacy of Prayer, I shall speak the next Opportunity.

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# THE XXIX Lecture.

And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that  
I may continue in the same unto my Life's  
End.

**H**AVING fully explained to you (so far as lead thereunto by the Words of our Church-Catechism, in the Preliminary Questions and Answers thereof,) the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, the Solemnity whereby you enter'd into it, and the mighty Obligations lying upon you to perform it; I am now upon shewing you the *Means* whereby we shall be enabled to perform this so important a Covenant, wherein all our Happiness both in this and the other World, is contain'd and wrapp'd up; a thing indeed, which it does exceedingly concern you to be well inform'd about, it being impossible to perform any thing as it ought, without the Knowledge of its due and proper Means.

And the First Means, in order to perform your Covenant as I have shew'd you, is a Holy, Christian, and Firm Resolution to be faithful in the same; the Importance of these Words, **So I will.** But a Resolution it must be, which is taken up not in Confidence of our own Strength, but of God's Help. And therefore,

Secondly, The next necessary Means to enable us to discharge our part of this Covenant, must be the Grace and Assistance of God, ~~which you have taught you in these Words; And by God's Help~~ **so I will.** And concerning this, I have also spoke all that I think is necessary to be shew'd ~~you~~ in this Place: For,

157. I have declar'd to you in what Necessity we do stand, by reason of our own Natural Weakness, of the Divine Assistance, to enable us to overcome the Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to perform our Covenant with God. And,

2dly,



And I have ſhew'd you what the Divine Aſſiſtance is, and what Meaſures of it, proportionably to ſuch our Neceſſity, God will beſtow upon us to enable us to perform our Covenant with him.

And now the Third Means whereby we ſhall both obtain the Divine Aſſiſtance, and be enabled alſo to diſcharge our Covenant, is *Prayer unto God to give us his Grace, that we may continue faithful in our Covenant unto our Lives end.*

I ſhall not here undertake to treat of the whole Subject of Prayer in the full Extent thereof: This will be more properly done in another Place, when we come in the latter part of the Catechiſm to explain the Lord's Prayer. For as our moſt Excellent Catechiſm does obſerve this moſt uſeful Method in your Inſtruction, to teach you firſt in general the Terms and Conditions of your Covenant, and all things relating to it, and then to deſcend to a more particular Conſideration of the ſame Points; So we cannot do better, than to follow the ſame Method in the Explication of theſe Points. All that I ſhall therefore do at preſent, ſhall be;

I. To ſhew you what is meant by praying unto God.

II. To lay before you how effectual a Means of performing your Covenant praying unto God will be; not only as it will morally diſpoſe, nay, naturally enforce, and lay a neceſſity upon you to be faithful therein; but as it will certainly procure you the Divine Aſſiſtance.

And Firſt, I am to ſhew you in a few Words what is meant by praying unto God. And by Prayer, I do not here mean in the ſtricteſt ſence of the Words, our Petitions only to Almighty God, wherein we do implore his Goodneſs to beſtow upon us through Chriſt, what he knows to be beſt both for our Bodies and Souls: This indeed is the moſt proper and immediate ſence of the Words, and the ſence that is moſt directly here intended. But however in the largeſt ſence of the Word, I do alſo mean by *Praying*, all that Application we make to the Divine Majeſty, when either by *confefſing* our Sins unto him we own our ſelves to deſerve his utmoſt Wrath, and the ſevereſt Punishments; or by *petitioning* of him, we entreat his Forgiveneſs of the ſame, and that he will ſtrengthen us with his Grace to do better for the future; or when by *interceding* for others, we intreat the like Favour of God for them, in the Forgiveneſs of their Sins, and in the Preſervation of their Innocence; or laſtly, when we return him Thanks for whatever Mercies we, or others have receiv'd at his hands. All theſe are ſo many Parts of that General Duty of Prayer; and in whichſoever of theſe Acts of Devotion we apply and addreſs our ſelves to God, we are ſaid to pray, as appears in the Inſtance of the *Phariſee* and *Publican*; both which are ſaid to have gone up into the Temple to pray, Luk. 18. 10. as well the proud *Phariſee*, who uttered only his Thanks to God that he was not as bad as other Men were; as the honeſt *Publican*, who pour'd out his Soul to God in an humble Confeſſion of his own Vileneſs, and in an earneſt Petition that

The full Meaning of Prayer.

God would be merciful to him a Sinner. Thus you see what is meant by praying unto God, and that all the Parts and Acts, of Devotion are therein included; though principally and more directly by praying unto God, is to be understood here, our petitioning his Grace and Assistance.

Prayer a most  
effectual  
Means of per-  
forming our  
Covenant.

Secondly, And I am now to shew you, how effectual a Means of performing your Covenant praying unto God will be; not only as it will morally dispose, nay, and naturally enforce, and lay a necessity, a restraint upon you to be faithful therein, but as it will certainly procure for you the Divine Assistance.

1. As it mo-  
rally disposes  
us to be obe-  
dient unto  
God.

And, 1. I say that Prayer will be a very effectual Means to enable you to perform the Covenant of Grace, though we consider how far it morally disposes us to Vertue and Goodness. In Prayer we draw near to God, we approach the Divine Presence, we hold Communion with him: And those who consider that thus they do in Prayer, how can they think of not quitting their Sins, which render them so odious, so hateful to God, into whose Presence no impure thing must presume to enter? It is observable what a mighty Influence it will have upon a Man, to be often in the Company of one whom the Spirit of God has greatly sanctify'd, into whose Soul the Divine Image is manifestly restored, and who is more than ordinarily eminent for his Piety, Sobriety, Humility, Justice, and Charity. The shining Graces and Vertues of such a Person, will strike an awful Respect and Veneration into the Hearts of all that come near him; so that they dare not offer at, nor so much as think of any wicked, unjust, unchast, or other villainous Action in his Presence; and when gone from him, there is scarcely any so reprobate, but will carry off some good Dispositions to the like Vertues so eminent in that Person. And how then can any appear before God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, and not be put into the most holy Frame and Temper of Mind? It is but to be frequent with God in Prayer, and it would insensibly mould us into a like Heavenly Temper and Frame of Spirit, and at length work in us a Divine Nature.

2. As it natu-  
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us to be  
faithful to  
him.

Nay, 2. constant Prayer will more than dispose us; it will naturally enforce us to be faithful with God. I mean it is a Duty of that Nature, that it is scarcely to be imagin'd how any one should persevere in Prayer, and yet persevere withal to violate his Covenant with God: For why? If I regard Iniquity in my heart; that is, if I do not repent of it, and turn away from it, the Lord will not hear me, Psal. 66. 18. Nay, the Wise Man tells us, that he who turns away his Ear from hearing the Law, that his Prayer shall be even an Abomination to the Lord, Prov. 28. 9. So that whilst a Man continues impenitent, his Prayers, instead of appeasing, will but the more inflame the Wrath of God against him.

And good reason why; for consider all the Parts of Prayer, and you will find they are but meer Mockery out of the unhallowed Mouths of Impenitent Sinners; for what less than the vilest Mockery can it be, for any one, whilst he allows himself in any Wickedness, to come gravely into God's Presence, and there confess before him, that he has offended

offended against his Holy Laws; that he has left undone those things which he ought to have done, and that he has done those things which he ought not to have done; and yet notwithstanding all this, designs no otherwise, than to offend him in like manner again? And how impudently it is to affront God to the Face; for any impenitent Wretch to put up such Petitions as these, But do thou, O Lord, notwithstanding I have sinn'd, and will continue yet to sin (for this is the true Import of a wicked Man's Prayers, neither more nor less) have Mercy upon me a miserable Offender? And tho' he is far from repenting, yet to say, Spare thou me that confess my Faults, Restore thou me that am penitent? And again, with what Confidence can wicked Christians pretend to interceed with God for his Favours to Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, when alas they are much less the Favourites of God themselves; and it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment, than for wicked Christians, Matth. 11. 24. I do confess indeed, as to that part of Prayer which we call Thanksgiving, the most wicked and impenitent Sinners may bless God for their Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life: For he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil, and on the Good; and sendeth Rain on the Just, and on the Unjust, Matth. 5. 45; and there's nothing hinders but they should praise him for it.

But with what shew of Sincerity can they be thought to bless him above all for his inestimable Love in his Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of Grace, and for the hopes of Glory; when so long as they continue in their Sins, they can expect no benefit from Christ's Redemption, and can have no hopes of Glory?

True it is, there have been observ'd in the World, both in our Saviour's Time, and of latter days, a sort of Impious and Prophane Wretches, that have been greatly given to Pray, and yet have been most notorious Lyars and Slanderers; Proud and Censorious; and above all, most cruel and unmerciful Exactors and Oppressors; but it is plain, they were either Hypocrites and Atheists in the bottom, and for a pretence and colour only, made long Prayers, that they might more easily devour Widows Houses, Matth. 23. 14. and so by the Opinion of their Sanctity delude unwary People to trust 'em, till having 'em within their Power, they might grind 'em to Powder. Or they owe this to some other Wicked and Heretical Principles, as our Modern Antinomians, who do found their favour with God in his Arbitrary Election of their Persons; without any respect had to their Virtues and Graces, as acceptable through the Mediation of Christ; and will therefore pretend to pray to him; nay, and in their Prayers presume to talk with him, as familiarly as one Friend does to another. But alas, the Scripture gives none the least grounds for such Confidence and Presumption; but does indeed let us know, it is a fearful thing to presume to pray to God, and at the same time to continue in Sin.

Sacrifices amongst the Jews were a kind of sensible and visible Prayers, and Prayers did usually accompany them; but whilst that People were notoriously wicked, see how God does express his detestation of such their Sacrifices and Prayers, Isai. 66. 3. He that killeth an Oxe, is as if he slew a Man; he that Sacrificeth a Lamb, as if

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*if he cut off a Dogs Neck; he that Offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swines Blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blessed an Idol.*

So that there is a great necessity of Resolving to forsake Sin, and of being faithful in our Covenant, if we will pray to God; but if Men will go on wilfully in sinful Courses, they had e'en as good not pray at all. Heaven and Hell, Light and Darkness may be joyn'd together, and Reconcil'd, as well as Prayer and Impenitence.

3. As it will  
certainly pro-  
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3. And especially, Prayer duly qualify'd, will be a most effectual Means to enable you to discharge your Covenant, as it procures for you the Grace and Assistance of God, without which you cannot perform it, as has already been shew'd you. I say, if duly Qualify'd, if put up with Faith and Sincerity; for as appears from the last Particular, the Prayers of such as are resolutely Wicked will avail nothing but to their greater Damnation. But otherwise Prayer doubtless is the most prevalent thing in the World with God, to derive down his Blessings, Favours, and Graces of all sorts upon us. "Prayer, saith the Learned and Pious Bishop Taylor, hath saved Cities and Kingdoms from Ruine. Prayer hath raised Dead Men to Life, hath stopped the violence of Fire, and shut the Mouths of wild Beasts: It hath alter'd the course of Nature, hath caused Rain in Egypt, and Drought in the Sea: It made the Sun to go back from West to East, and the Moon to stand still, and Rocks and Mountains to walk; and it cures Diseases without Physick, and makes Physick to do the work of Nature; and, in a word, does many Miracles. But of all the Miracles that Prayer doth, there is none so valuable, (if any so great) as to Sanctify our Natures, and to enable us to perform our Covenant with God, which Prayer is a most effectual means to enable us to do.

I say, That Prayer will most effectually procure for us the Graces of the Holy Spirit, to enable us to perform our Covenant with God, of which we have a most full and pregnant Proof, Luke 11, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. our blessed Saviour, in the foregoing Verses, having given his Disciples a Prayer to learn, to enforce upon 'em the constant and devout Exercise of this most Heavenly Duty, tells 'em, by way of Parable, how prevalent an Importunate Prayer will be, even with an Ill-natur'd Man, to incline him to grant the Desires of him that Petitions him. And then he proceeds to tell 'em, That much more will Constancy, and Earnestness in Prayer, prevail upon God, who is more tender to us, and more forward of himself to do us good, than our very Parents. *And I say unto you, Ask and ye shall have, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be open'd unto you; for everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you, that is a Father, will he give him a Stone; or if he ask a Fish, will he for a Fish give him a Serpent; or if he shall ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion? If ye then being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Which is as if he should say, There is no fear that God should deny such Petitions, or give his Children any hurtful thing, when they ask that which is good for them.

them : And tho' many things, which Men ask, be not good, yet his Spirit, and the Assistances of it are so undoubtedly such, that they will never be deny'd to them that ask them of the Father. This is so full a proof of the prevalency of Prayer to procure of God the Grace of his Holy Spirit, to sanctifie our Natures, and to enable us to perform the Conditions of our Covenant, that it would be e'en lost labour to multiply any more Texts to this purpose.

What then remains, but that we therefore most earnestly and constantly Pray unto God, that he would *Sanctifie our Natures*, that he would *grant unto us according to the Riches of his Grace, to be strengthen'd with Might by his Spirit in the inward Man*. Particularly,

Let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie our Understandings*, that being transform'd by the renewing of our Minds, we may be able to have a Spiritual discerning of the things of God, *being wise to that which is good, but simple and harmless to that which is Evil*.

Let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie and Reform our Wills*, that we may in every thing submit them unto his; delighting to do his Will. *Not seeking our own Will, but the Will of him that sent us,*

And let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie and Circumcise our Hearts*, that we may set our Affections on things above, and not on Earthly Matters,

Farther yet, Let us therefore particularly pray, that having Sanctify'd us thoroughly in our Understandings, Wills, and Affections, he would enable us to perform each of the Conditions of our Covenant.

That he would strengthen our Faith, and enable us to *hold the Profession of our Faith without wavering*, that he would grant unto us Repentance, *That no longer spending the rest of our Time in the Flesh, to the Lusts of Men, but to the Will of God, the time past of our Lives may suffice to have served divers Lusts*, and that for the future we may walk as Obedient Children, *not fashioning our selves according to the former Lusts in our Ignorance; but as he who hath called us is Holy, so we may be Holy in all manner of Conversation,*

And, *Lastly*, Let us pray unto him to give us his Grace, that we may thus continue, and persevere in Repentance, Faith, and Obedience unto our Lives end; that *being stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, we may patiently continue in well-doing, without weariness, as knowing that in due time we shall reap, if we faint not*; which that we may do, God Almighty grant of his infinite Mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

*if he cut off a Dogs Neck; he that Offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swines Blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blessed an Idol.*

So that there is a great necessity of Resolving to forsake Sin, and of being faithful in our Covenant, if we will pray to God; but if Men will go on wilfully in sinful Courses, they had e'en as good not pray at all. Heaven and Hell, Light and Darkness may be joyn'd together, and Reconcil'd, as well as Prayer and Impenitence.

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stance.

3. And especially, Prayer duly qualify'd, will be a most effectual Means to enable you to discharge your Covenant, as it procures for you the Grace and Assistance of God, without which you cannot perform it, as has already been shew'd you. I say, if duly Qualify'd, if put up with Faith and Sincerity; for as appears from the last Particular, the Prayers of such as are resolutely Wicked will avail nothing but to their greatest Damnation. But otherwise Prayer doubtless is the most prevalent thing in the World with God, to derive down his Blessings, Favours, and Graces of all sorts upon us. "Prayer, saith the Learned and Pious Bishop Taylor, hath saved Cities and Kingdoms from Ruine. Prayer hath raised Dead Men to Life, hath stopped the violence of Fire, and shut the Mouths of wild Beasts: It hath alter'd the course of Nature, hath caused Rain in Egypt, and Drought in the Sea: It made the Sun to go back from West to East, and the Moon to stand still, and Rocks and Mountains to walk; and it cures Diseases without Physick, and makes Physick to do the work of Nature; and, in a word, does many Miracles. But of all the Miracles that Prayer doth, there is none so valuable, (if any so great) as to Sanctify our Natures, and to enable us to perform our Covenant with God, which Prayer is a most effectual means to enable us to do.

I say, That Prayer will most effectually procure for us the Graces of the Holy Spirit, to enable us to perform our Covenant with God, of which we have a most full and pregnant Proof, Luke 11, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. our blessed Saviour, in the foregoing Verses, having given his Disciples a Prayer to learn, to enforce upon 'em the constant and devout Exercise of this most Heavenly Duty, tells 'em, by way of Parable, how prevalent an Importunate Prayer will be, even with an Ill-natur'd Man, to incline him to grant the Desires of him that Petitions him. And then he proceeds to tell 'em, That much more will Constancy, and Earnestness in Prayer, prevail upon God, who is more tender to us, and more forward of himself to do us good, than our very Parents. And I say unto you, Ask and ye shall have, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be open'd unto you; for everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you, that is a Father, will he give him a Stone; or if he ask a Fish, will he for a Fish give him a Serpent; or if he shall ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion? If ye then being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Which is as if he should say, There is no fear that God should deny such Petitions, or give his Children any hurtful thing, when they ask that which is good for them.



them : And tho' many things, which Men ask, be not good, yet his Spirit, and the Assistances of it are so undoubtedly such, that they will never be deny'd to them that ask them of the Father. This is so full a proof of the prevalency of Prayer to procure of God the Grace of his Holy Spirit, to sanctifie our Natures, and to enable us to perform the Conditions of our Covenant, that it would be e'en lost labour to multiply any more Texts to this purpose.

What then remains, but that we therefore most earnestly and constantly Pray unto God, that he would *Sanctifie our Natures*, that he would *grant unto us according to the Riches of his Grace, to be strengthen'd with Might by his Spirit in the inward Man*. Particularly,

Let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie our Understandings*, that being transform'd by the renewing of our Minds, we may be able to have a Spiritual discerning of the things of God, *being wise to that which is good, but simple and harmless to that which is Evil*.

Let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie and Reform our Wills*, that we may in every thing submit them unto his; delighting to do his Will. *Not seeking our own Will, but the Will of him that sent us,*

And let us therefore Pray, that he would *Sanctifie and Circumcise our Hearts*, that we may set our Affections on things above, and not on Earthly Matters,

Farther yet, Let us therefore particularly pray, that having Sanctify'd us thoroughly in our Understandings, Wills, and Affections, he would enable us to perform each of the Conditions of our Covenant.

That he would strengthen our Faith, and enable us to *hold the Profession of our Faith without wavering*, that he would grant unto us Repentance, *That no longer spending the rest of our Time in the Flesh, to the Lusts of Men, but to the Will of God, the time past of our Lives may suffice to have served divers Lusts, and that for the future we may walk as Obedient Children, not fashioning our selves according to the former Lusts in our Ignorance; but as he who hath called us is Holy, so we may be Holy in all manner of Conversation,*

And, *Lastly*, Let us pray unto him to give us his Grace, that we may thus continue, and persevere in Repentance, Faith, and Obedience unto our Lives end; that *being stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, we may patiently continue in well-doing, without weariness, as knowing that in due time we shall reap, if we faint not*; which that we may do, God Almighty grant of his infinite Mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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T H E

# XXX Lecture.

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## Wherein I was made.

**I**N several foregoing Lectures upon the Words of the Catechism, having explained all that I suppose necessary to be known by you, concerning the general Nature and Substance of the Covenant of Grace, the *Solemnity* whereby you entred into it, the Obligations upon you to perform it, and the Means whereby you shall be enabled to discharge it: I come now to do the like as to those Circumstances relating to your entrance into it, and requisite also to be consider'd by you.

These Circumstances are Two: First, *The Time when*. Secondly, *The Persons by whom, as by Proxies you were Initiated into the Covenant of Grace*.

1. *I will consider the Time when*; which, because it was as to most of you, in your Infancy, as is imply'd in these words, *wherein I was made*, a Time thought unseasonable by some Persons for so grand an Undertaking; therefore I will endeavour to Justifie the having been admitted into the Covenant of Grace, by Baptism, in the time of your Infancy. This, I say, is what these words, *wherein I was made*, do signifie to us, *viz.* That it was sometime heretofore, that you were *Baptized*, and entred into Covenant with God, which was, you know, as to the Children of most Believers, in the Age of Infancy. And now, I will justifie the thing, the being admitted into the Covenant of Grace by Baptism (*If the Children of Believing Parents*) even at such an Age.

*Children of Believing Parents have a right to be Baptized, prov'd from 1 Cor. 7. 14.*

I say, *If the Children of Believing Parents*; for that such have a greater Priviledge than others, and with reference to this very particular, of being Baptized, and Confederated with God, may be very fairly gathered from that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7. 14. *For the Unbelieving Husband is Sanctify'd by the Wife; and the Unbelieving Wife is Sanctify'd by the Husband, else were your Children unclean, but now are they Holy*; for the understanding which difficult place, we must con-

Consider the occasion of the Words, and the import of this Expression, *Else were your Children unclean, but now are they Holy.*

Now, the occasion of the Words, was a Question propounded to the Apostle, Whether a Believing Wife, or Husband, ought to dwell with an Unbeliever; which the Apostle resolves, that either of 'em might, and use this Argument for it, That the Unbeliever may, by the Conversation and Perswasion of his Wife, in time be Sanctify'd, and Converted himself to Christianity; however, if he be not, his Children on the account of the Mother, being a Christian, are not Unclean, but Holy; for the understanding of which Expression, it is to be consider'd, that there is a twofold Holiness ascribed to Persons in the New Testament, to omit some other Acceptations in the Old.

*First*, There is a *Spiritual and Inherent Holiness*, which is a necessary Qualification to make us capable of Happiness in the Life to come, and Members of the Church Triumphant in Heaven, according to that of St. Paul, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14.

*Secondly*, There is a *Relative, and outward, or Privilegial Holiness*, upon the account of Persons being separated from the rest of the World, to the pure and Holy Service, of a pure and Holy God; such as is the Holiness of all the Members of the Church Militant here on Earth, those I mean who are called into the Covenant of Grace, as you may see, 1 Pet. 2. 9. where speaking to the whole Catholick Church of Christians, as Christians, he calls 'em a *Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a peculiar People.* A *Holy Nation* do ye see he calls 'em, which was spoke on the account of that Holy Profession they were Baptized into, tho' all of 'em, in their own Persons, were not *Inherently Holy*, no more than all that are called to the Profession of the Gospel, are chosen to the Salvation of it. So that by these Expressions, *Else were your Children Unclean, but now are they Holy*, must be meant a *Relative and Privilegial Holiness* they have, by being descended from a Christian Parent, whereby they are capable of being Members of the Catholick Church, that *Holy Nation* meant in St. Peter; capable, I say, of being made so by Baptism, the only Door of entrance into it.

And if the Children, even of one *Believing Parent*, are thus *Relatively and Privilegially Holy*, by being within the Covenant, or capable of being took into it by Baptism, on the account of having one Christian Parent, much more should the Children of those be so accounted, both of whose Parents are Christians. Possibly one reason wherefore the Child of one Christian Parent is thus Holy, as to be reputed capable to be a Covenanted Member of Christ's Church, is, because it may be fairly presum'd, the Christian Parents Zeal for God's Glory, will make He or She train up that Child to the Knowledge, and Belief, and Service of the One True God; Father, Son; and Holy Ghost: And if it may be fairly presum'd, that where there is but one Christian Parent, that Pious Care will be there taken; much more may it, where both are Christians. So that the Children of such Parents as are both of 'em Christians, must have an undeniable Right to be Baptized into the Covenant of Grace.

This



This remarkable Scripture does indeed, to any unprejudic'd Mind, if put into its true Light, sufficiently prove it to be the peculiar Privilege of Christians Children to be took into Covenant with God; however, the most prejudic'd cannot deny, but that from hence it does appear, they have some Privilege more than ordinary, above the Children of meer Heathens. And that this is their Privilege, that they may be Confederated with God in Baptism, even in their very Infancy, I will farther prove from these following Arguments, and by proceeding gradually by these several Steps, shewing,

*May be prov'd  
also from several other  
Topicks.*

I. That Infants were Initiated by Circumcision into that Evangelical Covenant made with Abraham.

II. That they were Initiated both by Circumcision and Baptism, into that legal one deliver'd by Moses.

III. That it was, without all doubt, the Intention of our Saviour, that under the Gospel likewise, they should be Baptized into the Covenant of Grace.

IV. That agreeably to the Mind of their Master, the Baptizing of 'em into it, was, in all probability, practic'd by the Apostles of Christ.

V. That it is very agreeable to the Ends and Reason of Baptism, and the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that they should be Baptized into it. And,

VI. And Lastly, That it is a Happy, a mighty Advantage for those Infants, that have been at that Age Baptized into it. All which particulars, when I shall have made out, more perhaps may be, but I do not know any thing farther that need be said, to Justifie Infant Baptism. And,

*1. Because  
Infants were  
Initiated by  
Circumcision  
into the E-  
vangelical Co-  
venant made  
with Abraham.*

I. I am to shew you, that Infants were Initiated by Circumcision into that Evangelical Covenant made with Abraham.

I do call the Covenant God made with Abraham, Gen. 17. wherein the Almighty promis'd to be a God unto him, and his Seed after him, ver. 7. and that in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be Blessed: And Abraham, on the other side, Believing God, was to leave his Father's House, and Country, and Kindred, and their Idolatry, Gen. 12. 1, 2, 3. I do call this, I say, an *Evangelical Covenant*, having the Authority of an Apostle for it, who tells us, it was *Confirmed before of God in Christ*, and distinguishes it from that Covenant deliver'd by Moses, Gal. 3. 17.

*The Covenant  
made with A-  
braham, the  
same in Sub-  
stance with  
the 2 made  
with Adam.*

It was indeed the same *Covenant of Grace*, and in something a clearer Edition of it, that was made with Adam soon after his Fall, wherein God vouchsafed to restore him to a State of Salvation, in that Promise of the *Seed of the Woman*; that is, the *Messiah*, which should bruise the *Serpent's head*; that is, the Devil. It was the same Covenant of Grace, I say, and express'd indeed in something clearer Terms,

Terms, than at first in that Promise to *Adam*; for still the nearer the Son of Righteousness did approach, with healing under his wings, the more full were the manifestations he was pleas'd to make of this Salvation, and the Methods of it. And it contained under these Words, *And in thy Seed shall all Families of the Earth be blessed, Gen. 22. 18.* And the same in a more imperfect Edition of it with that made with Christ.

3. All the Gospel Promises of Pardon, Justification, and Happiness, couched more darkly, than afterwards they were revealed in the Gospel, for by the Messiah's conferring of these things, as has appeared since the preaching of the Gospel, *Abraham*, and we, and all his Spiritual Seed, are blessed. And it had the same Conditions, on the performance of which these Promises did depend, viz. Faith; for *Abraham* believed in the Lord, and it was accounted unto him for Righteousness, *Gen. 15. 6.* And lastly, Circumcision, the Seal of this Covenant, is call'd the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom. 4. 11.* that is, the Seal of that Covenant, whose Condition is such a Righteousness as proceeds from Faith, which is the very Condition of the Gospel Covenant: All which do manifestly shew, that the Covenant made with *Abraham*, was that very Evangelical Gospel Covenant, revealed afterwards more fully in the Gospel itself; and which was establish'd by the Mediation of Christ, betwixt God and us.

And now that Infants, even at eight Days old, were to be initiated into this Covenant by Circumcision, is to be seen, *Gen. 17. 12.* And ye shall circumcise the Flesh of your Fore-skin, and I will be a Token of the Covenant betwixt me and you; and he that is eight days old shall be circumcised amongst you. Nay, and so indispensable was this Circumcision, even at eight days old, that it is declared, *Verse 14.* that the uncircumcised Male-child, whose Flesh of his Fore-skin is not circumcised, that that Soul should be cut off from his People; he hath broken his Covenant. So that I think it is plain, that is the Covenant made with *Abraham*, was no other than the Evangelical Covenant in a more imperfect Edition of it; for Infants were of necessity, under the greatest Penalties of being debar'd all benefits from it, to be initiated into it, by the outward Rite, and Seal of Circumcision.

And now this I take to be a very good Argument to justify, nay, to necessitate the Baptizing of Infants now under the more compleat and perfect manifestation of the Covenant of Grace. For why should any one imagine, if it were no unreasonable thing, for Children of eight days old to be initiated into it then, by an outward Right or Ceremony, why, I say, should any one think it should be so now? Nor is it at all material, that then it was by Circumcision, now by Baptism; for both of 'em are equally outward Rites and Seals of the same Covenant; which Rite of Circumcision God was pleas'd to change for that of Baptism, only because this latter would be more agreeable to both Jews and Gentiles, design'd now to be took into the Covenant of Grace; and who, for the most part, would not have endured Circumcision, which was abominable, and a matter of Derision to the greatest part of the Heathen World.

And was it then declar'd, *Gen. 17. 14.* that the uncircumcised Male-child, whose Flesh of his Fore-skin was not circumcised, that that Soul should be cut off from his People, as one that had broken his Covenant;

As he was cut off from the Covenant, who was not circumcised; so that Person is to be excluded the Church, who is not baptized.



nant; and may it not be thought now a Matter of indispensable Duty and Necessity, to baptize Children into the Covenant; and a thing extremely dangerous and prejudicial to their Happiness, to deny it? I am sure it is not for want of Scripture Evidence, that we should not think Baptism as necessary now, as Circumcision was then; since the same Word of Truth hath told us, *except we be born of Water, and of the Spirit, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, John 3:5.* So that those misguided Parents do not know what infinite prejudice they do to their Infant Children, in denying them the Privilege of baptizing them into the Covenant of Grace; and whether they may not be a means of depriving them of all those inestimable Benefits, Christ has purchased with his Blood for us, and which he ensures only to those who are in Covenant with him.

2. Because they were initiated both by Circumcision and Baptism into that legal one delivered by Moses.

Infants were circumcised into that Evangelical Covenant made with Abraham; for they were both circumcised, and also baptized into that legal one delivered by Moses. The Legal Covenant delivered by Moses is frequently distinguished by St. Paul from the Covenant of Grace confirmed with Abraham. Thus, Gal. 3:17. *This I say, before the Covenant was confirmed of God with Abraham in Christ, the Law which was 430 Years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the Promise of Grace (which is so called) to signify the gracious nature of it, as being made very much up of most gracious Promises) of none effect.* Here the Legal Covenant is distinguished, both in Time, as being given 430 years after; and in point of efficacy, as that which is not of that force, as to disannul the other in its efficacy, and imperant Covenant made with Abraham. It is usual sometimes for after Covenants to disannul former ones; but it seems to be not so here; for this Legal Covenant given after, was superinduct upon the other still remaining in force, as the only one by which Salvation was to be expected.

And this Enquiry might well be, to what End this Legal Covenant was added; like an Appendix, as it were, and Codicill to the former Will. And not here to give a full Account of all the Ends and Reasons of it, which is besides our present purpose; my Answer to the Question, *Why was it added before the Law, shall be with St. Paul, Gal. 3:19. that it was added because of Transgressions, until the Seed should come. It was added because of Transgressions; that is, to discover their guilt, and heinousness, and guilt of Sin, for the discovery of the perfect Rule of Righteousness, made it easy for Persons comparing their own Lives therewith, to find out how infinitely defective they were. And it was added till the Seed should come, it showed them therefore by giving them a sight of their Sins, how much they stood in need of a Saviour. And the Sacrifices, Offerings, and Rituals of it, which were very many, were, for the most part, but Types and Shadows of this Saviour to come. This may suffice at present, as to the Legal Covenant, and the Reasons of it.*

That they were admitted by Circumcision, indispensable

And now terms enquired, whether Infants, during the time of this Legal Covenant delivered by Moses, were not admitted into it, as well as grown Persons, by some outward Rites and Solemnities? And that we shall see they were, both by Circumcision and Baptism. That Infants of eight days old were of necessity to be circumcised, was positively

sively



sively commanded, *Lev. 12. 3. And in the eighth day, the Flesh of his Fore-skin shall be circumcised*; which Circumcision was an Engagement upon them to keep the whole Law, *Gal. 5. 3.* But that the Infants in the Jewish Church were circumcised, even at eight days old, is so evident a Truth to those that do themselves read, or hear the Scriptures read, that I need not certainly spend time in proving of it.

But that they were baptized, is not indeed so commonly understood and known, but wants not its Evidence even from Scripture: *That they were also by Baptism asserted both by* As, *1 Cor. 10. 1, 2.* where St. Paul tells us, *All our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea, and were all baptized unto Moses*; that is, the Religion of Moses, in the Cloud, and in the Sea. And that their very Infants, as well as their Parents, were so baptized, is certain, for that *all were alike under the Cloud, and in the Sea.*

And I think it is generally agreed amongst the Learned, that as *And by Jewish Writers.* the Israelites, during their whole Travels through the Red Sea, and Wilderness, were not circumcised, because it would make them fore for travelling; so instead thereof, that they were baptized, or admitted into Covenant by Baptism.

But especially they tell us, it was used for the Admission of Proselytes, or those who had been before *Alicns and Strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel*, that it was especially used for the Admission of such into the Covenants and Promises. And the Original use of it to this end, some ascribe to the Patriarch Jacob, when he chose into his Family and Church the young Women of *Shechem*, and other Heathens, who then lived with him. *Jacob said to his Family, and to all who were with him, put away from you the strange Gods, and be ye clean, and change your Garments, Gen. 35. 2.* By which Words, *Be ye clean*, some do interpret the washing of the Body, or Baptism; which Reason it self does also persuade us to believe, as being very proper, when they were to abandon their filthy Idolatry, and to embrace the pure Worship of the true God.

And it is also well known to those, who are skilled in Jewish Customs, that when any Parents, or Masters of Families were thus baptized, that all who did belong to them, their very Children, and Servants, and all those over whom they might be supposed to have any Authority, and Power, to bring 'em up in the Jewish Religion and Covenant, were also baptized. "Nay, all the Nation of *Israel*, says *Lightfoot*, do assert, as it were with one Mouth, that all the Nation of *Israel* were brought into the Covenant, among other things by Baptism. *Israel* (as he cites *Maimonides* in particular) was admitted into the Covenant by three things; namely, by Circumcision, Baptism, and Sacrifice. So that I hope it does sufficiently appear by what has been said, that Infants in the Jewish Church were both circumcised, and also baptized into the Legal Covenant.

Nor is it of little force, to prove that Christian Infants under the Covenant of Grace, may be baptized, that the Jewish Infants were circumcised, and baptized under the legal: For not now to insist, that circumcising and baptizing of Infants, and that by God Almighty's own Appointment, does demonstrate to us, that there is no Incapacity

capacity in an Infant, that he should be admitted into Covenant with God, by some outward Solemnity, even whilst an Infant; for if there were any unreasonableness in the thing it self, God would not have so order'd it. But not now to insist on this; I do humbly conceive it may be fairly gather'd, that if under a more harsh and rigorous Dispensation, Children were so far Priviledg'd, as to be admitted to the Advantages of a Covenant with God, much more are they to be presum'd to have this Favour granted 'em by God, under that blessed and Merciful Dispensation of the Gospel, which, in all respects, is a better Covenant, and establish'd upon better Promises, Heb. 8. 6. and contains far more enlarged Priviledges. But to proceed, for I design not this of the Baptizing of Infants into the Legal Covenant, so much an Argument, to build Infant Baptism upon (tho' it is no inconsiderable one of it self to that purpose) as a Foundation rather, for a far better proof of the Matter, which is this, that Baptizing of Infants having been practic'd in the Jewish Church.

III. Because our Saviour Adopted the Jewish Rite of Baptism, for the Sacrament of Initiation, without excluding Children from being Baptized.

The force of this Argument:

III. That it was without doubt the Intentions of our Saviour, they should continue to be Initiated into the Christian Church by Baptism, also, he having Adopted the Jewish Rite of Baptism for the Sacrament of Initiation, without excluding Children from being Baptized.

It is a thing well known amongst the Learned, that the Matter of both the Sacraments were of a Jewish Original, and more of Human than Divine Institution, till made so by our Saviour, who notwithstanding approving of 'em, rejected Circumcision and the Passover from being the Sacraments of his Religion; and Adopted the Baptism of Water, instead of Circumcision; and Bread and Wine instead of the Passover to be the two Sacraments, the one of Initiation, the other of Confirmation into his Religion and Covenant. And finding the Baptizing, as well as the Circumcising of Infants to be practic'd in the Jewish Church, his not forbidding Children to be of the number of Persons Baptized, when he chose Baptism to Initiate Persons into his most Holy Covenant, must be an undeniable Argument to all unprejudic'd Persons, I do think, that he design'd no Alteration of the Persons to be Baptized, but intended such for Baptism, as well as they were before; for if it had been contrary to our Saviour's Intentions, that Children in their Infancy should be Baptized, tho' he had admitted the use of Baptism, he would expressly have forbid the use of it to Children, or it would be impossible for the Church not to be led into the Error of Baptizing 'em, by reason of his silence in not forbidding 'em.

Nor was it at all needful, if he design'd Infants to be Baptized, he should have given some Command about it; for taking it as he found it in the Jewish Church, who Baptized Infants as well as grown Persons, this was sufficient to clear his Design, that Infants in the Christian, as well as grown Persons, should also be Baptized, or else he would have declared the contrary.

Dr. Lightfoot, "knowing well enough, that little Children used to be Baptized; there was no need of a Precept for that which had ever, by common use, prevailed. Please to take the Case as it is thus represented by the Learned Dr. Lightfoot.

"If



" If a Royal Proclamation should now Issue forth in these words,  
 " Let every one on the Lord's-Day, resort to the Publick Assembly  
 " in the Church, certainly he would be Mad, who in times to come,  
 " should argue hence, that Prayers, Sermons, Singing of Psalms, were  
 " not to be Celebrated on the Lord's-Day in the Publick Assemblies,  
 " because there is no mention of them in the Proclamation. For the  
 " Proclamation provided for the Celebration of the Lord's-Day, in  
 " the Publick Assemblies, in general; but there was no need to make  
 " mention of the particular Kinds of the Divine Worship to be Cele-  
 " brated there, when they were always, and every where well known,  
 " and in daily use, before the Publishing of the Proclamation, and  
 " when it was Published. The Case is the very same in Baptism.  
 " Christ Instituted it for an Evangelical Sacrament, whereby all should  
 " be admitted into the Profession of the Gospel, as heretofore it was  
 " used for admission into *Profelytism* into the *Jewish* Religion. The  
 " particulars belonging to it, as the manner of Baptizing, the Age,  
 " the Sex to be Baptized, &c. had no need of a Rule or Definition,  
 " because these were by the common use of 'em sufficiently known,  
 " even to the most Illiterate and Ignorant Men.

" On the other-hand therefore, there was need of a plain and open  
 " Prohibition, that Infants and little Children should not be Baptized,  
 " if our Saviour would not have had 'em Baptized. For since it was  
 " common in all Ages foregoing, that little Children should be Bap-  
 " tized, if Christ had been minded to have that Custom abolished, he  
 " would have openly forbidden it. His silence therefore, and the si-  
 " lence of the Scripture in this Matter, is the best Argument that  
 " can be in this Case for Infant Baptism, and does confirm and continue  
 " it unto all Ages.

Thus that Learned Author. And thus to me it seems beyond all  
 doubt, that the Intention of our Saviour was, that under the Gospel  
 likewise, as well as before, under the Law, Infants should be Baptized  
 into the Covenant of Grace.

IV. And agreeably to the Mind of their Master, the Baptizing of *IV. Because*  
*em into it was in all probability practis'd by the Apostles of Christ, in all probabi-*  
 As for our Saviour's own Practice in this Matter, we are to expect no *lity Infant-*  
 Evidence, the Evangelist having declar'd it, *John 4. 2.* that *Baptism was*  
*Baptized not, but his Disciples:* But that his Disciples did actually *practic'd by*  
 Baptize Infants, is more than probable from those three famous places *the Apostles.*  
 in the Scripture, viz. two of 'em *Acts 16. 15.* and again, the 33. *ver.*  
 and the other, *1 Cor. 1. 16.* where we find mention made of *whole*  
*Houholds being Baptized,* together with the Head of the Families re-  
 spectively. And tho' we cannot certainly conclude, there were In-  
 fants in those Families, yet as it is hardly to be imagin'd, that there  
 were not such in some of 'em; so if there were any, we may certain-  
 ly conclude they were Baptized, both because of the mention made  
 of the *Houhold being Baptized,* and of the known Custom in the  
*Jewish* Church, from which Christian Baptism was derived, of Bap-  
 tizing all, both Children and Servants, together with the Heads of the  
 Families, when any were Profelyted and Converted, as was shew'd  
 before.



V. Because it was very agreeable to the End and Reason of Baptism, and the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that Infants should be Baptiz'd into it.

Infants not incapable of entering into Covenant with God, prov'd from Deut. 29.

As also from the Nature of the thing.

They are capable of having Privileges conferr'd upon them.

V. And it was very agreeable to the ends and reason of Baptism, and the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that Infants should be Baptiz'd into it. It is here, the Adversaries of Infant Baptism do chiefly raise their Batteries against it. They do therefore say, that Infants are incapable Subjects, because that Baptism is a Covenanting with God, and such are incapable of entering into Covenants. But the contrary, I will make appear, viz. that the Infants of Believers are capable of Covenant-Priviledges, and of Covenant-Engagements too; and if of those, then the Signs and Seals whereby such Priviledges are ensur'd unto 'em, can in no Reason and Equity be deny'd 'em.

Now, that Infants are capable to enter into Covenant with God, is apparent in general from *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12. Te stand this Day all of you before the Lord your God, your Captains, your Tribes, your Elders, and your Officers, with all the Men of Israel; your little Ones your Wives, and the Stranger that is in thy Camp, that thou should'st enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day.* Here you see, that the very Little Ones were call'd upon to enter into Covenant with God, as well as the Elders of the Tribes of *Israel*. And that *Circumcision*, the Sign or Token of the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 11.* that this was to be imprinted on Children, not exceeding Eight Days Old, is what every body knows that reads the Scripture; so that there is nothing in the nature of a Covenant in general, that should make it unreasonable, that Children and Infants should enter into it, except you will accuse God himself of appointing things unfit or unreasonable, which were meer Blasphemy but to imagine.

Nor is there any thing in the Nature of the Covenant of Grace in particular, that should exclude Infants from being Parties in it. It consists; as has been more than once told you, of certain and invaluable Priviledges and Benefits made over to us on God's part; and of certain very reasonable Conditions to be performed on ours.

But as for the Priviledges, which of 'em is it which may not be Seal'd and Confirm'd to an Infant? May not such a one be made a Member of *Christ's Church*, when our Saviour hath told us, that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven? May not a Child or Infant be Adopted a Child of God, and so be brought into a condition of Pardon, as well as the Child or Infant of an Attainted Rebel, by the Grace and Favour of his Prince, be restored to his Blood, and to all the Priviledges of a Free-born Subject? And, Lastly, may not such be made an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, when of such, as was before said, must consist the Kingdom of Heaven? There is nothing in the nature of the thing, that should hinder Priviledges from being confirm'd unto, and conferr'd upon Children as well as Elder People; and we do daily see it practic'd in other concerns. Infant Princes are sometimes Crown'd in their Cradles; and Children, to their great Advantage, are often left Executors to great Fortunes and Estates: In both which Cases, as there are usually very great Priviledges redounding to 'em, as well as Engagements lying upon 'em, so it is not thought that they are incapable of 'em.

Nor

Nor is it more unreasonable, that they should be oblig'd to perform certain Duties, as Conditions of enjoying those Priviledges. The Covenant before-mention'd, that the *Little Ones*, as well as Elders, were call'd to enter into, *Deut. 29.* as it had this Priviledge made over to 'em on God's part, that *He would be unto them a God*, which indeed was a happiness to 'em, beyond what all the Nations on Earth besides did enjoy; and was in it self inestimable; so the Counter part was, that *they should be unto him a People*, *Ver. 13.* a People that would not turn away from the Lord their God, to go and serve the Gods of other Nations. And Circumcision which was Imprinted on Infants of Eight Days old, did not only confer on 'em this Priviledge, that they should be God's peculiar People; but withal, laid upon 'em this Obligation, to observe the whole Law; for *I testifie for ye, said St. Paul, to every Man that is Circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law*, *Gal. 5. 3.* And surely, we do daily see, that a Man may bind his Heir whilst an Infant. True it is, this cannot be done by the Infant himself, nor by any other for him; but in such Cases, where it will be very much for the Interest of the Infant to be so bound; not unless he is to be a gainer by the Bargain: But provided the Infant shall gain considerable Advantages by the Covenants that shall be made in his behalf, and without his express consent, by his Parents, or Tutors, or Guardians, then he shall stand oblig'd in all Law and Equity, to what Conditions they have promis'd for him. We see it often so Adjudg'd in our Courts of Justice: And the Case is the very same here. The Conditions of the Covenant of Grace are of some difficulty, true it is, to be perform'd, yet have such invaluable Benefits annexed to 'em, that the Tongue of Men and Angels are not sufficient to express the value of 'em; and they were worth our utmost endeavours to obtain, tho' by the severest Penances and Services of a Thousand Years; and therefore it ought not to be thought any unreasonable thing, that others should be engag'd in our Name for our performance of such Conditions, or that we should be accounted as Engag'd our selves, for what our Guardians, our *God-fathers* and *Godmothers* did Promise for us; for this indeed, which was the

*And of being bound to Conditions.*

VI. And *Last* thing I propos'd to speak on this Argument, *We are VI. Because it to account it the greatest Happiness to those Infants, that were so early enter'd into Covenant with God, in order to the Enjoyment of such inestimable Priviledges, and to their Engagement into such reasonable Baptiz'd Services.* *is a great Advantage to Infants to be Baptiz'd.*

*First*, I say, We are to account it the highest Happiness to those Infants, that have been so early enter'd into Covenant with God, on the account of their enjoying thereby such *inestimable Priviledges*; for being Baptized, and having once Covenanted with God, they are now no more under the Condemnation of the first Covenant made with *Adam*, nor shall be prejudic'd by the forfeiture of Mercies which he had incur'd for himself and his Posterity, by his breach of that Covenant. Their *Original Sin* is now wash'd off, and shall be no more imputed to 'em; that is, the former Covenant which was at first Cancell'd, by being *nail'd to the Cross of Christ*, is now particularly

*First, On the account of enjoying thereby such inestimable Priviledges.*

Can-

Cancell'd, and put out of any force with respect to them, they being Baptized, and thereby enter'd into a *Covenant of Grace*; so that whatever Guilt might have been imputed unto 'em, by reason of *Adam's Transgression*, shall now be clean done away from 'em; which seems to me to be the meaning of our *Original Sin being wash'd away by the Waters of Baptism*; It imports, that the Covenant which made Original Sin imputable to us, is now *Cancell'd*, and the Condemning force of it took away by our being admitted into another more Merciful and Gracious Covenant. And this, I say, is a very great Happiness to Infants; so that we may be sure of their Salvation, whenever they dye in their Infancy, having all the Forgiving Mercies purchas'd by Christ, and held forth to them in the Covenant of Grace, enstated on them. And indeed, if the thing were disputable, whether there were any such thing as the Original Sin of *Adam* imputed to his Posterity; however, I should be very careful to have my Infant as early Baptized as possible. It is at leastwise the surer side to be actually in a Covenant of Grace and Mercy, than to remain under one, where there may be the least probability of incurring Danger by being in it. One cannot make too sure of a state of Salvation. So that the being early Baptized into such a state, is to be accounted a very great Happiness, were it only on the account of those mighty Priviledges it instates upon 'em, and insures unto 'em.

Secondly, On account of their being engag'd thereby so early in the Service of God.

Secondly, Nor is it less a Happiness to those Infants that have been Baptiz'd, *That they have thereby been so early engag'd in the Service of God.* It is happy for 'em, that God has had the first Possession of 'em. It will be like to prove a means of keeping out the Devil from getting any Interest in 'em. They have been hereby already pre-engag'd, and dedicated to the Service of their good God; and it is to be hop'd their Parents and Sureties (or it will be infinitely their fault) will be continually minding 'em of it, as they grow up, and will instil by degrees into their Hearts, an understanding and sense of the Terms and Articles of their Covenant with God; watching withal, that they swerve not away from their solemn Vows and Promises made unto him. And besides, by this early Dedication of Persons, whilst Infants, unto God, it is provided (which alone is a great benefit to them, and the Church of Christ) that so many shall not stand off so long out of the Pale of the Church, by not entering into it through the Door of Baptism; that so many shall not stand out, I say, through some unreasonable Fear or Scrupulosity, lest if they Sin after Baptism, it would be worse for 'em; even as many as do now absent themselves, upon some such pretences, from the Lord's-Supper, perhaps all the days of their Lives. Many Thousands of these, who are now happily within the Pale of the Church, and Covenant of Grace by Baptism, if they were not to be took into it till grown up to Years of Discretion, 'tis much to be fear'd, least by reason of some Misper-swasions or Delusions of Satan, or Love to their Lusts (which every Man naturally has) they would defer it too long, till the approach of Death perhaps, before they'd put themselves into a state of Salvation, as some misperswaded Persons did in the Primitive Times, to the very great Scandal of the Church, and the infinite prejudice of their own Souls, when many times they were snatcht away by Death before they



they could put themselves out of the State of Infidels. But this Scandal to the Church of Christ, and danger to their own Souls is happily prevented by Persons being Baptized into it in their Infancy. So that, I say, it is a very great Happiness to those Infants that have been Baptized on this account also, that they have been so early engag'd in the Service of God.

And now, I hope, what has been hitherto said, may be sufficient to Justifie your having been Baptized into the Covenant of Grace in the time of your Infancy. Each of these Arguments I have made use of to this purpose, I do take to have sufficient force of themselves to prove the Point; but I have endeavour'd so to range 'em one with another, that besides that Native Strength there may be in each of 'em in particular, like the Parts of a well-compacted Building, they should be the stronger for being joyn'd together. And tho' indeed it may require your more close Attention to carry the whole Train of Arguments along in your Minds, than to apprehend one single Reason by it self, yet the Conviction, I am sure, would be the stronger, if you will take 'em all, as I have laid 'em together.

But let this suffice as to the Circumstance of Time, and to Justifie our having been Initiated by Baptism into the Covenant of Grace, in the Age of Infancy, the thing imply'd in these words, *wherein I was made*. Our next Consideration, with reference to these Circumstances of the Covenant of Grace, must be *Who were the Persons who presented you to Baptism*, and Introduc'd you to the Covenant of Grace. And it was your *Godfathers and Godmothers* who did it, *who did Promise and Vow three things in your Name*. But of this the next Opportunity.

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## THE XXXI Lecture.

**What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?**

**They did promise and vow three things in my Name.**

**I**N commenting upon these Words, **In my Baptism wherein I was made,** I have already consider'd one material Circumstance, relating to the Entrance into the Covenant of Grace; *viz. the Time when you were initiated therein*; and I have justified your having been baptized into it, even in the Age of Infancy. And now I come to the like Consideration, and Vindication of a

Second Circumstance relating to the same Matter, and requisite also to be consider'd by you; *viz. whom as your Proxies and Sureties (considering it was at an Age you could not personally do it your selves) did present you to Baptism, and undertake for you this Blessed Covenant.* And it was **your Godfathers and Godmothers, who did promise and vow three things in your Name**: For the more full Explication, and Justification of which Use of Godfathers and Godmothers, I will enquire,

**I. Into the Meaning and Importance of the Words, Godfathers and Godmothers.**

**II. Into the Nature of their Office. They did promise and vow three things in my Name.**

**III. I will shew what reason the Church had to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, both to represent, and to engage for the Infant in Baptism.**

**IV. And lastly, for the farther Justification of the thing out of Scripture, I will prove from thence, as a Power and Authority given by**

by Christ to the Governours of the Church; to appoint such reasonable Circumstances, as they shall think fit, for the better Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men; so that their appointing of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, was a most excellent and useful Institution to this purpose. And,

I. Let us enquire into the Meaning and Importance of the Words, *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*. And in the Ancient Writers of the Church, we find the Title of *Sponsors*, or *Sureties*, given 'em, which imports them to be Persons that have given Security to God and the Church, about some Matter relating to the Infants they have presented to Baptism. As also they are called *Fide Jussors*; which is a Word of the like Importance, and signifies a Surety, or Bondsman. In the latter Ages, particularly amongst the Reformed Churches, where they are generally in Use (and even *Junius* and *Tremellius*, *Calvinist* Writers, do derive them from *Jf. 8. 6.*) they came to be called *Compadres*, and *Commatres*; which give me leave to translate *Joint-fathers*, and *Joint-mothers*, with respect to their Spiritual Birth and State; which seems farther to import, that the Security they give to the Church, with reference to those Children they present to Baptism, is concerning something that belongs to Natural Parents to take care of, the Words signifying 'em to be join'd with 'em in the Parental Care. And lastly, amongst us they are properly enough stiled *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, because this Collateral Security given by 'em, in behalf of the Infants, is given to God; and his Church, and is a Security given by these Persons, stiled *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, that they will be instrumental to their New Birth, as their Parents were to their Natural. And let this suffice, as to the Importance of the Words; all which put together, do signifie thus much, that *Godfathers*, and *Godmothers*, are a Collateral Security join'd together with the Natural Parents, in the behalf of their Children entred into Covenant with God; and that this their Security is given to God, and his Church, that they will be Instruments in begetting them to God.

And now let us enquire into the Nature of their Office, imply'd in these Words, *They did promise and bote three things in my Name*. And truly the Nature of their Office seems to me to be no more, nor less than this; 1. An expresse Engagement given to Christ, and his Church, in behalf of those Infants they present to Baptism, that so soon as they become capable to be taught, they shall be instructed in the Nature of that Covenant, which they their Sureties have undertook for them; and, 2. That they shall be admonish'd, and advis'd by them to lead their Lives according to the Obligations laid upon them by that their Covenant: And lastly, That those Infants shall moreover, after sufficient Instruction in their Covenant, solemnly take upon themselves the Profession of it, before the Chief Minister of Christ's Church, the Bishop. I say that the Office of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, does seem to me to import no more, nor less, than a Security given to God and his Church, that the baptized Person shall do thus; shall be instructed in his Covenant; shall

I. The Importance of the Terms *Godfathers*, *Godmothers*.  
Tertul. de Bap.  
August. Tom.  
2. 35. d. 2.

II. The Nature of their Office.



shall be minded to live according to it, and shall solemnly declare it, that it is his sincere Intentions so to do. And,

First, It is not  
only as a Proxy  
to speak for  
the Child in  
Baptism.

First, that he shall be instructed in his Covenant. True it is, these Words, *They did promise, and vow three things in my Name* do seem to import something more; as if the Sureties in Baptism did not only engage for the Instruction of the Party in the Nature of his Covenant, but for his actual performance of it too; which as it lays a very great and weighty Charge upon Sureties, too much it is thought for any one to undertake for another; so I am not willing to interpret them in a sense, as will be apt to deterr conscientious People from doing so charitable an Office; and make others have no Care about it, as a Bond they despair of ever discharging. I am not therefore inclin'd to expound them in so discouraging a sense, if the Expressions will fairly bear milder, as I humbly conceive these will: For to *do a thing in ones name* (especially in the transacting of Covenants, where Privileges and Advantages accrue thereby) is to act as a Proxy in the others stead. In the acting as such, in any Covenant, by reason of the Absence, or Minority, or other Incapacity of the Person mainly concerned, it is very usual for the Proxy, so to personate the Covenanting Party himself, as if he were the Person whom he represents. And thus these Words, *They did promise and vow three things in my Name*, shall be understood to mean no more than this; that I being incapable my self, by reason of my Infancy, to express my Consent to my Part of the Covenant, my Godfathers and Godmothers were my Mouth, who did it for me. Now this I do indeed take to be part of the Sense, but not the whole Importance; for then there would be no Engagement to any thing on the Godfathers and Godmothers part; whereas they are something more than meer Proxies, and are really, and truly Sureties for something to be done, tho' not perhaps that the Person baptized shall actually perform his Covenant; yet, at least, that he shall be instructed in the Nature of it, so as to know what he ought to perform.

But it im-  
ports withal a  
Security given  
to God, and  
his Church;  
that the Child  
shall be instru-  
cted in his Ba-  
ptismal Cove-  
nant.

And this taking care of the Child's Instruction, is the first part of the Duty of Godfathers and Godmothers: For the best way, I conceive, to understand the meaning of any Author in Words more generally express'd, is to consult those Expositions and Explications he makes of his own Sense elsewhere, if any such can be met withal. And now we have a most excellent Key for the opening of this Engagement of the Godfathers and Godmothers, in the behalf of the Child baptized, in the Exhortation given them after Baptism, and in the Charge to bring the Baptized Person to Confirmation. The Words of the Exhortation run thus:

"Forasmuch as this Child hath promised by you that are his Sureties, to renounce the Devil, and all his Works; to believe in God, and to serve him; Ye must remember, that it is your Parts and Duty to see that this Infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn Vow, Promise, and Profession he hath here made by you. And that he may know these things the better, ye shall call upon him to hear Sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide, that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue, and all other things,"

which

“ which a Chriſtian ought to know, and believe to his Soul’s Health;  
 “ And that this Child may be vertuoſly brought up to lead a Godly  
 “ and a Chriſtian Life, remembering always that Baptiſm doth repre-  
 “ ſent unto us our Profeſſion, which is to follow the Example of our  
 “ Saviour Chriſt, and to be made like unto him; that as he dyed,  
 “ and roſe again for us, ſo ſhould we, who are Baptized, *dye to Sin,*  
 “ *and riſe again unto Righteouſneſs,* continually mortifying all our  
 “ evil and corrupt Affections, and daily proceeding in all Vertue, and  
 “ Godlineſs of Living.

So that hereby it does appear, that the Engagement of the God-  
 fathers and Godmothers is in the firſt place, that they will take care to  
 have thoſe Infants, whom they have preſented to Baptiſm, Catechiſed  
 in the Nature of that Covenant they have in the way of Proxy for  
 them, enter’d into; which is the Importance of theſe Words: “ *Re-*  
 “ *member that it is your Parts and Duties, to ſee that this Infant be*  
 “ *taught ſo ſoon as he ſhall learn, what a ſolemn Vow, Promise, and*  
 “ *Profeſſion he hath here made by you,* which is the proper Work of Ca-  
 techiſing to teach ’em.

They are alſo, for their farther Edification in this grand Matter of  
 their Covenant, to call upon ’em to *bear Sermons*, which are a Me-  
 thod of Inſtruction deſign’d to improve ’em in all that neceſſary  
 Knowledge, the beginnings of which was laid by Catechiſing. But  
 eſpecially their Care muſt be to have ’em thoroughly Catechiſed, which  
 lays the Foundation of Divine Knowledge in the Principles of Reli-  
 gion, without which there can be no bottom for their Edification  
 any other way; Chieſly, ſays the Exhortation, *ye ſhall provide that*  
*they may learn the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Command-*  
*ments in the Vulgar Tongue, and all other things which a Chriſtian*  
*ought to know, and believe to his Soul’s Health,* which I ſay, is the pro-  
 per work of Catechiſing to teach ’em.

Secondly, Having thus took care to have ’em well inſtructed by  
 Catechiſing and Preaching, in the Articles and Conditions of their  
 Covenant, their next Care muſt be to admoniſh and adviſe ’em, ſe-  
 riouſly to apply themſelves to live according to thoſe Obligations  
 laid upon ’em in their Covenant with God. Youth, of all Perſons,  
 want good Monitors, as being of themſelves giddy, and inconfide-  
 rate, and too regardleſs of what does mainly concern ’em; and  
 their Sureties ought to make it a part of their Care, peculiarly to  
 admoniſh ſuch as they have a hand in bringing into the Covenant,  
 that they live according to it; ſo it follows in that moſt Excellent  
 Exhortation, *Ye ſhall take care that this Child may be vertuoſly brought*  
*up, to lead a Godly and a Chriſtian Life, &c.*

*Secondly, It is  
 the Office of  
 theſe Sureties  
 to admoniſh  
 the Child to  
 live according  
 to his Baptiſ-  
 mal Engage-  
 ments.*

Thirdly, And then as for the laſt thing, wherein I ſaid conſiſts  
 the Office of Sureties in Baptiſm; viz. that they take care their  
 Youth after all due Inſtruction in the Nature of the Covenant, ſhould  
 perſonally, for their own parts, take it upon themſelves before the  
 Chief Miniſter of Chriſt, the Biſhop: This you have deliver’d plain-  
 ly and fully in the Charge given about Confirmation, running in  
 theſe Words, *Ye are to take care that this Child be brought to the*  
*Biſhop to be confirmed by him, ſo ſoon as he can ſay the Creed,*

*Thirdly, And  
 to take care  
 that at Years  
 of Diſcretion,  
 the Child  
 ſhould take  
 his Vow upon  
 himſelf before  
 the Biſhop in  
 Confirmation.*

*the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the Vulgar Tongue.*

So that if you will allow the Blessed Authors of our most Divine and Excellent Liturgy, the Liberty to explain themselves: The utmost Importance of these Words, *They did promise and vow three things in my Name*, is, 1. an Engagement to Christ, and his Church, in the behalf of the Baptized Infant; that so soon as he becomes capable, he shall be instructed in his Covenant; 2. that he shall be admonish'd to live according to it; and 3. that he shall solemnly declare his sincere Intentions so to do.

III. *The Reason the Church has to require Sureties.*

III. And now let us see what reason the Church had to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, not only to represent, but thus to engage for the Infant in Baptism.

*It is for the better Order and Decency of the Administration, that some should be the Mouth of the Child.*

And truly, as to the representing part, there seems to me to be as great reason for that, as that all things in Divine Administrations should be done *decently, and in order*, as the Apostle commands, *I Cor. 14. 40.* For why? You are not again to be told, that this whole Solemnity of Baptism is the transacting of a Covenant with God; a Covenant, wherein both Parties concerned are either personally themselves, or by others, as their Proxies, to make mutual Engagements one to another, to perform each his Part of the Covenant.

Now God, who is the first and prime Party in this Covenant: He, true it is, is sufficient for these things of himself, and needs no other to engage for him; yet in Compassion to our Infirmities, who cannot bear the Majesty of God's Presence (hence the *Israelites*, after the Thunder and Lightning on Mount Sinai, *prayed he would speak to them by his Servant Moses, lest they should dye*) Tho' God need not, I say, to treat with us by Proxy; yet, in conformity to our Weakness he hath substituted the Priest in his stead, to assure us of the Promises, his part of the Covenant. And what then shall the Infant do, who is so far incapable of transacting personally the Covenant, and engaging by himself to perform its Conditions, that he does not, nor cannot understand the Conditions of it? what I say shall he do? Why it is fit, that he likewise by his Sureties, as by Proxy, should engage that he will do his part. To this purpose, saith a Father; "since for want of Age Children cannot believe with the Heart to Righteousness, nor confess with the Mouth unto Salvation, therefore others answer for 'em, that the Sacrament may be admitted compleatly to 'em."

It would indeed seem to me a very odd, and indecent, and disorderly thing (extremely unlike the usual way of transacting Covenants) when one, and He so great a Party concern'd as God, should vouchsafe to make over by his Proxy (the Minister of the Covenant) express Assurances of Infinite Mercies; the other Party, a poor wretched Creature, in whose Favour this is done, should not have a Mouth, either by himself or others, to make an open and solemn Protestation of Acceptance of those Gracious Terms, and of sincere Resolutions to perform his part. A silence on his side, wou'd look like a sullen, ungrateful refusal of such Gracious Overtures and Terms of



of Mercy, the most indecent and disorderly thing in the World. The Administration would be extremely indecent, without a Proxy to Represent the Infant.

And indeed, so much is the Honour of God, and of the Church, <sup>*It is of concernment to the Church, that Security be given, that every one who is admitted a Member into it, should live to the Reputation and Interest of it.*</sup> and of the Christian Religion concern'd, that no Person be enter'd into the Profession of the Gospel, who will not live answerably to it, that it is highly fit, it is extremely requisite, all possible Security shou'd be first given to God and his Church, that the Person admitted into the Society of Christians, should at leastwise be Instructed, and Admonish'd, and be Engag'd solemnly to profess what belongs to him to do, as a Member of that Body. So far it is requisite Security should be given before he is admitted a Member of Christ's Church, if it be not farther necessary it should be given, for his living according to the Obligations of the Covenant. Indeed, so far is it from being unreasonable to require Security, that he should be Instructed and Admonish'd, what are his Obligations, that if we closely consider the Matter, it may not seem so unreasonable, as some do imagine, to exact Security of the Person Baptized, even that he shall live up to the Obligations laid upon him in his Covenant.

We see it daily practis'd, and it is allow'd a reasonable and prudent <sup>*This is what Societies, whose Honour and Interest is of infinite less consequence, do daily require.*</sup> Caution in all Societies of Men, to exact Security from those who are not responsible themselves, that they shall Answer the Ends and Interests of that Society, whereinto they desire to be admitted, before they will take 'em in amongst 'em. This is the common practice you know, in all Corporations and Companies. And even in our Parish concerns, no Man shall be admitted into either, from whom they apprehend any Danger, without giving Security against all Disadvantages that may accrue by his Admission. And may not the Church of Christ, upon as good Grounds, require good Security from Children, who cannot Answer, nor Engage for themselves; and who (considering the inbred Corruption of Nature) are in danger enough (without a great deal of Care) of proving very pernicious Members? Shall not She, I say, as well as other Societies, whose Interests are infinitely less, exact of all that are admitted into her Body, that they will never depart from, or contemn her Laws, nor Act contrary to the Honour and Interest of her, and her Lord and Saviour? Is not the Church of Christ a Society, yea, the chief of all Societies? Are not her, and her great Masters Honour and Interest, the most considerable of all others in the World? And does it not then infinitely concern her, that none of her Members turn Rebels to the Laws of God, that they do not become Profane and Wicked Livers, the greatest Injury that can be done to God and her self? I sure, I think it does, for there is nothing tends more to the dishonour of her Saviour, and of Religion, and of her self, than that any of her Members should become Profane and Wicked. The ill Lives of her Children make her a Sport to the vile Atheist, a Scorn and Reproach to *Turks* and *Infidels*. It extremely hinders the Gospels prevailing upon Infidels abroad, and is hugely Offensive to all her Pious Sons at home. Blame her not therefore for taking such Prudent Care, as to admit none into her Society, without having first Security given of their good Behaviour.

And

That of Parents not sufficient without Collateral Security.

And indeed, so far is she from deserving Blame therein, that we are to reckon her moderate in her Demands, when she requires no more than Security, that the New Member shall be well Principled, and Educated, and duly Admonish'd. Things that may be easily in our Power to take care of.

Nor is it sufficient Security to the Church, that the Parents are bound to take this Care of their Children. The Natural Parents, it is confess'd, are oblig'd both by the *Light of Nature*, and the express Laws of God, to *bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; But this is not enough in so grand a Concern; Parents possibly may not live to Educate their Children, and how many of those that do live, are wofully careless in the Principling of them, with a due Knowledge and Sense of the Goodness of God to them, and those great Duties they owe to him? What through Earthly-mindedness in some, who care for nothing but to Train 'em up in all the Arts and Cunning, how to Live, and grow Rich in the World; and what through the Fondness of others, whose fatal Indulgence will not suffer 'em to put their Children much upon any thing ungrateful to 'em (as Religion indeed is to Flesh and Blood) these things consider'd, it is more than requisite, that besides the Obligations of the Natural Parent, there should be moreover some *Collateral Security* given by such Persons as are likely to use all convenient Industry upon the Parents neglect (which is too usual) to provide 'em good Education, as far as *Reading* at least, to instil good Principles into 'em by *Catechising*, and to give 'em good *Admonitions* by way of Reproof or Exhortations, as there shall be occasion.

The requiring of this as reasonable now as in the Primitive Times.

Nor is the giving such Security for their Religious Education less necessary now, than it was in the Primitive Times. It is well known, that then all Infants had their *Sponsors* or *Sureties* that engag'd at the Font for their Christian Education, and Faithfulness in their Covenant; And that for this, amongst other Reasons, left in those Persecuting Times the Parents being took off by their Persecutors, their Infants and Children shou'd remain expos'd to the danger of being Train'd up in *Paganish* Idolatry, for want of some Persons particularly Engag'd to take care of 'em.

It is Charge no unreasonable Imposition at any time, being little more than what is requir'd from one Christian to another in common Charity at all times.

The Church, true it is, is not now so often shak'd with violent Persecutions, as in those Days: Tho' sometimes it has its cruel Enemies, in the very Bowels of it, full as furious as ever were the Heathens in their bloody Slaughters, and as zealous to ravish from the Orthodox their Children, to train 'em up in their wicked Idolatry. But however, besides this, it ought to be consider'd, that our Covenant with God is not broke, only by *Apostatizing* back from the Service of the true God, to the Worship of the Devil, or Evil Spirits, but by living in Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts; and therefore that equal Care ought to be taken, as then that the Child shou'd *Renounce the Devil and all his Works, and believe in God*; so now that he shall *Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of his Life*; And God and his Church is as much Dishonour'd, and the Soul as much endanger'd by the lewd and vitious Lives of Christians now, as by the *Apostacy* of Christians to Paganism or Idolatry, it was then; and therefore there is as much reason, that the Church should now take

take all poſſible Security againſt the one, as then it did againſt the other ſort of ſcandalous and dangerous Violations of its Covenant; eſpecially if it be farther conſidered, that Proſperity and Peace being infinitely more apt to corrupt the Lives and Manners of Men, than Sufferings are; Perſons are much more ſubject to fall into theſe Violations of their Covenant, by ſinful Immoralities now, than by *Paganish* Apoſtacies they were then.

Nor, *Laſtly*, Is it at any time a hard and unreaſonable Impoſition upon the *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, to make 'em give Security for the Chriſtian Education of other Peoples Children. We are all of us to be helpful to one another, eſpecially to be aſſiſtant in thoſe things which concern the good of their Immortal Souls; and there is none but a cruel and murderous *Cain* would have ſaid, *Am I my Brothers Keeper*. And if the utmoſt that the Sureties do Promise and Vow in behalf of the Infant, does extend to no more than this, to ſee that he ſhall be Train'd up in the Principles of Religion; and Admoniſh'd to live up according to what he has ſolemnly Covenanted; and openly and ſolemnly to confirm this his Covenant, when he comes to an Age of Underſtanding; and this only upon the natural Parents neglect: Why, this truly 'tis confeſt, will coſt ſome Pains, and perhaps too ſome ſmall Charge; but then let ſuch a one conſider, he has an opportunity put into his Hands to ſave a Soul, and let him withal conſider, what the Apoſtle ſays for his Encouragement therein, *James 5. 20.* that *He which ſhall ſave a Soul from Death ſhall cover a multitude of Sins*. So that thus you ſee what reaſon the Church had to appoint *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, not only to *repreſent* the Infant, but to *engage* for it in Baptiſm. But

IV. And, *Laſtly*, For a further Juſtification of the thing out of Scripture, I will prove from thence, as a Power and Authority given by Chriſt to the Governours of the Church, to appoint ſuch reaſonable Circumſtances, as they ſhall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Adminiſtrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men; ſo that their appointment of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, was a moſt excellent and uſeful Inſtitution to this purpoſe. But this, as it is a Point, that muſt have a great deal ſaid to the Proof and Enlargement of it, ſo I ſhall defer the ſpeaking to it till the next Opportunity.

PPPP THE



## THE

## XXXII Lecture.

**Q. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you.**

**Ans. They did Promise and Do three things in my Name.**

**I**N order to the Explication of these Words, and to the Justification and Proof of the Doctrine contain'd in them, I have already led you,

**I. Into the meaning of the Words, Godfathers and Godmothers.**

**II. Into the Nature of their Office.**

**III. I have shew'd you what Reason the Church had to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, both to Represent, and Engage for the Infant in Baptism. And now,**

**Lastly,** For the further Justification out of Scripture, of the use of Godfathers and Godmothers, to Introduce you to Baptism, I will prove from thence, *As a Power and Authority given by Christ to the Governours of the Church, to appoint such reasonable Circumstantials as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men; so that the Churches appointing of Godfathers and Godmothers was a most excellent, rational, and useful Institution to this purpose.* And I have reserv'd this Head of Discourse for the last; and shall make one entire Discourse upon it, not only to shew the Lawfulness and Expediency of Godfathers and Godmothers, but withal, with a design to lay such Principles in the Heart, as will sufficiently Justifie our Church in all its other Rites and Usages in Divine Administrations, and will enable you to oppose those that shall Gainsay. To proceed therefore, I say,

IV. Be-

IV. Besides the reason of the thing; In order to justify out of Scripture the use of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* to introduce Infants to Baptism, I will prove from thence, as a Power and Authority given by Christ, to the Governours of the Church, to appoint such reasonable Circumstances as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men; so that their appointing of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* was a most excellent and useful Institution to this purpose.

I say, *besides the reason of the thing*. It is a very unhappy Prejudice which some do labour under, that the best reason is no proof with them, without some express Scriptures to command that very Particular, tho' it be not a Matter above Reason, but left by Scripture to the Determination of it.

Now, to come to a right Understanding of this Matter, we must distinguish upon such Points as are not, and such as are to be determined by meer Reason. And,

1. There are some great Points of Faith, such as the *Mystery of the Trinity*, of the *Incarnation*, *Mediation*, and *Satisfaction of Christ*, above the reach of Human Reason to have found out; and now, that they are Reveal'd beyond the compass of it fully to comprehend; which Articles we call the *Mysteries of Christianity*. And these we are bound to Believe, according as they are Reveal'd to us, without adding to, or taking from 'em, being fully assur'd, that the Holy Scripture, that Word of God, which does Reveal these Truths to us, is it self most Infallibly true, as being the Testimony of him who is Infinite Wisdom, and cannot be deceiv'd himself; and is Infinite Justice, and will not, cannot deceive others. And therefore with respect to these Sacred Truths, it is the part of every Christian to *Cast down Imaginations*, or Reasonings, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ: 2 Cor 10. 5. Not but that Reason has its Use here in Judging of the sufficiency of those Proofs from Scripture, which are produc'd to establish the Truth of any Article of Faith. But as it is beyond the Power of meer Natural Reason to have discover'd God's Methods of saving us by Christ, and the like; so it wou'd be the highest Presumption to oppose our narrow scantling of Reason to God's Wisdom in his Dispensations towards us.

IV. A further Justification of the use of Godfathers and Godmothers.

It is a sufficient Justification of any Ecclesiastic Institution, that it be reasonable, tho' not supported by any express Scripture.

1. The sole Authority whereon to ground the Belief of the Mysteries of Religion, must be Divine Revelation.

2. In the next place, there are other Points in Religion, as well *Articles of Faith*, as *Moral Duties*, to regulate both our Belief and Practice, in reference to which, we are left to Scripture and Reason conjunctly, with this difference; that we must have our Eye upon Scripture, as the only perfect Rule, such are the Articles of Natural Religion, as the *Belief of God*, of a *Providence*, of the *Immortality of the Soul*, and of *Rewards and Punishments in another World*. And all, or most of the *Duties of Morality* also, have the Light of Nature, or our own Reason, both directing and enforcing the Practice of 'em. Only our Natural Reason in this our Corrupted State, being a Candle that burns very dimm: We must, I say, have our Eye

2. Both Faith and Practice, as to the Articles of Natural Religion, and Moral Duties, grounded both upon the Word of God and right Reason.

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principally upon the Light of Scripture, which is the singular Gift of God, given to Conduct us safe through the Intricate Mazes and Difficulties of this World, to another, and that a better; to be a *Light unto our Feet, and a Lanthorn unto our Path*, that our Footsteps may not slide, *Psal. 119. 105.* And a most perfect Rule the Scripture is, *It being given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furnish'd unto all Good Works,* 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

But tho' Natural Reason, now in its Eclipse by Sin, yields not Light enough of it self, without the help of Divine Revelation, to guide us unto Happiness; yet so far as it can direct us, and is agreeable to Scripture Light, we are to follow its Guidance; It is as well the Gift of God as the other, and was given us to the same Ends and Purposes; and we are therefore to bless God for so excellent a Gift as our Reason, and must follow its Dictates, without going contrary to the Reason within us, in whatsoever it does prescribe us that is not contradicted by the Word of God; for where the Word of God does not thwart, our own Reason in that Case, is left by God in its Original Authority, which it had before Divine Revelation, and we are to look upon it as the Divine Will and Pleasure, that we should act what seems but reasonable.

And hence we find that our Blessed Saviour himself, and his Apostles, do often appeal to our own Reason as a Guide we ought to follow. Thus *Luke 12. 57. Tea, and why even of your selves judge you not what is right,* says he to the Pharisees. And indeed in one of the most important Cases that was ever put to any decision, the Apostles Peter and John do appeal to Men's own Reason to determine 'em what they shou'd do. *The Rulers of the Jews call'd them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor to teach in the Name of Jesus; but Peter and John answer'd, and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye,* Acts 4. 18, 19. The Apostles did not here call in the Authority of Scripture to justify them in what they did, but did appeal to their own Reason. And the 1 Cor. 10. the Apostle undertaking to convince them how ill a thing it was for 'em to partake of things offer'd to Idols; how does he go about to do it? Why, says he, *I speak unto wise Men, judge ye what I say, Verse 15.* and so goes on by many Arguments, fetch'd from the Nature and Reason of Sacrifices and Sacraments, to prove that Men ought not to partake of two such different ones, as the *Table of God, and the Table of Devils, Verse 21.*

3. Religious Rites and Ceremonies left to the Reason and Discretion of Church-Governours to appoint.

3. There are besides these necessary and essential Parts of Religion, others but Appendages, or certain Modes and Circumstances retaining to it; such are those Ceremonies appointed by Authority for the greater Solemnity of Divine Administrations. And the determining what these are to be, is plainly permitted to the Reason and Discretion of the Governors of the Church, as may be fairly concluded from 1 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 18. where the Apostle makes Reason the sole Judge that must be submitted to in point of Decency and Order. The Case before the Apostle, was, *whether Women ought to appear veiled in the Church;* and how does he prove it; why from Rea-



Reason, and the Custom of the Churches; and he severely twits those as perverse Persons, that in such Cases will not be govern'd by such Arguments: *Judge in your selves, is it comely that a Woman pray with her Head uncover'd, doth not even Nature, that is Custom, it self teach you? But if any Man be contentious, we have no such Custom, nor the Churches of God;* that is, if People will be so perverse, I think it sufficient to tell them, as that which ought to govern 'em, the Nature and Reason of the thing, and the Custom of the Church is against 'em. So that Reason you see is not excluded from judging what is fit, and proper to be done in point of Decency and Order, and for the greater Solemnity of Divine Administrations: And therefore having shew'd you what Reason the Church had to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, not only as Proxies to represent the Infant, but as Sureties to engage for it in Baptism, I need not much to insist on other Arguments in justification of that Usage of the Church. But however that no Scruple may remain, if possible, in any honest Mind, that will be convinc'd, for a farther justification of the Lawfulness and Expedience of 'em:

I. I will prove out of Scripture, that there has been a Power and Authority given by Christ to the Governors of the Church, to appoint such reasonable Circumstances as they shall think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men. And then,

II. I will shew you, that their appointing of Godfathers and Godmothers, was a most excellent and useful Institution to this purpose.

And First, I will prove out of Scripture, that there has been a Power, &c.

It were a thing very well worth the Consideration of all Persons, what Observance our Blessed Saviour paid to those Circumstantial Appointments relating to Divine Worship, which the Governors of the Jewish Church (without any farther Authority from Scripture, than the general Commission and Power it gives Governors to exercise) had of their own selves order'd. There was as little need one would have thought in that Church, as any, for its Governors to appoint any new Modes or Ceremonies of Worship, God himself having given 'em such very particular Orders relating to Divine Service. But as little need as there seem'd to be of 'em, they however took upon 'em to appoint many things, besides what God himself had ordain'd. And yet Christ did not only conform to 'em in his own Practice, as appears from his celebrating the *Feast of Dedication*, *John 10. 22, 23.* which was a Festival of mere humane Institution, in memory of their Deliverance from the Tyranny of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and the purging of the Temple, and the Altar from his Idolatry; but moreover, he commanded his Followers to do so too, so long as they continued under the Jewish Dispensation.

From the several Instances that are given by *Thorndicke*, *Hammond*, *Lightfoot*, and others skillful in Jewish Learning, they were Unscriptural Rites, and meer Humane Inventions, all those many Ceremonies

*I. That Christ gave Commission to the Governors of the Church to institute such Usages, as shall be for Decency and Order, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men, prov'd from Scripture.*

*This allow'd to the Governors of the Jewish Church.*

remories that the Jews had introduced into their Worship in our Saviour's time: But notwithstanding that, the Blessed Jesus did not only himself conform to the Custom of the Church in the Use of 'em, but commanded likewise others to be obedient likewise themselves to those who sat in Moses's Chair; whose Constitutions therefore he would have to be observ'd, as you may see, *Matth. 23. 2, 3. Saying, the Scribes and Pharisees* (that is, those of 'em who made up the Sanhedrim, the highest Jurisdiction in Church-Matters amongst the Jews) *sit in Moses's Seat; and therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* They had given him but little reason to favour their Authority, as you may see in the Chapter immediately before: They came to insnare him with their Questions, and to trepan him into some mischievous Inconvenience if they could; but however, no sooner was he quit of their troublesome Company, but he takes care to advertise his Disciples, that such of 'em who were of the Sanhedrim, were to be looked on by them as their lawful Rulers, that had Authority over them, succeeding Moses and the Seventy, *Numb. 11. 16.* as our Bishops and Church-Governours, now do Christ and his Apostles; and therefore he bids 'em to conform themselves to all their lawful Commands, in all regular Subjection and Obedience; which is a manifest proof, what Observance our Saviour would have to be paid to the Governors of the Church in all their Constitutions, that, relating to the Worship of God, do not thwart the Divine Commands.

True it is, our Blessed Lord did in another Place, *Matth. 15. 3.* reprimand the Pharisees for their Superstitious Observance of their Traditions, and for teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, *Verse 9.* But then it ought to be well considered, what sort of Traditions and Doctrines they were, whose Observance he reprov'd 'em for. And what were they, but such, in whose Observance they did plainly violate God's express Commands, or at least did undermine the force of his Laws thereby? As appears by the Instance he gives; which was this, of denying Maintenance to their Parents in necessity, under pretence of having devoted their Substance before to God; by which Evasion, he tells them, they made the Commandment of God, concerning Honour due to Parents, of none effect by their Traditions, *Verse 6.* and tells them withal, *that in vain they did worship him, teaching thus for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* Such Constitutions indeed, which did contradict, or evacuate and undermine the Laws of God, we see here he did reprove 'em for; but what is that to the forbidding those, which do no ways tend to any such thing, but to the greater Order and Decency of his Worship? As to such his own Doctrine, of observing the Commands of those who sat in Moses's Chair, and his own Practice in conforming to whatsoever they appointed of that Nature, does sufficiently shew us, what Power he own'd then to be in the Governours of the Church, to appoint such reasonable Ceremonies and Circumstances, as they should think fit, for the greater Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and for the better Edification of the Souls of Men.

*The same Power continu'd to those also who preside in the Christian.*

Nor did He, or his Apostles, afterwards retrench the Governors of the Christian Church of that Authority, which then he own'd to be in

in the Jewish. No; He commits it to their Care, that *all things* in the Church Assemblies *should be done unto edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. or so as may be most to the Benefit and Advantage of the Worshipers; and *Verse 40.* that *all things be done decently, and in order*; which Commands being only general, without particularly expressing all the ways whereby these things may be provided for, must of necessity leave it to the discretion of Church-Governors to appoint, what according to the Changes and Customs of Times and Places (which in these things do often vary) they in their Wisdom should think to be most fit, decent, and orderly to be observ'd.

And as he empower'd Governors to appoint, what in their discretion they should think fit to this purpose; so he commanded the People to be obedient to 'em in such their Constitutions and Appointments. *Obey them that have the Rule over you*, Heb. 13. 17. *and submit your selves to every Ordinance of Men for the Lord's sake*, To whose Ordinances the People are commanded to submit.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

The Apostle indeed, *Gal. 3. 1.* bids 'em *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ had made 'em free, and not to be entangl'd again with the Yoke of Bondage*; that is, not to impose upon themselves the necessity (for God did not) of observing *Moses's Law*, which they were so addicted to, and to dissuade 'em from which was the main Design of that Epistle; but then as he bids 'em preserve their Liberty from the *Mosaical Rites*, so *Peter, 1 Epist. 2. 16.* bids 'em not to abuse their Christian Liberty, and (tho' free from the burden and bondage of *Moses's Law*, which neither they, nor their Fathers were able to bear, yet) to take care they use not their Liberty for a Cloak of *Maliciousness*, *Verse 16.* to be a pretence for maliciously opposing the Ordinances of their Superiours; which in the 13th *Verse* he had bid 'em *submit to for the Lord's sake*, and that they might not bring a Reproach upon the Gospel of Christ, by a *Schismatical* and refractory Stubborness.

Nor do such Constitutions and Appointments, as do tend only to the better Order and Decency of *Divine Administrations*, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men, bring the Church-Governors under the Imputation of adding to the Book of Life, which is a thing so severely threat'ned, *Rev. 22. 18.* No, it is so far from adding any thing else unto, that it is the very executing no other, than that very Commission, the Word of Life has given 'em. God had entrusted Church-Governors with such Power and Authority under him, committing it to their Care by a Commission running in general Terms, to appoint what shall be thought *decent and orderly*, and tending to Edification in all *Divine Administrations*; and their particular Constitutions to that purpose, well suited to Time and Place, and not contradicting by their burdensome Number, nor insignificant Frivolousness, the Spirituality and plain Simplicity of the Gospel; but being few and grave (which admirably tends to Order and Edification) must needs be no other, than a *particular executing* of what they were impower'd to do, by a *general Command*: Even as an Ambassador, who has a general Commission granted him by his Prince, to treat on such Matters in his Negotiation, does not exceed, but execute his Commission in those particular Articles he does make, pursuant to such his Commission.

And



Decency and Order in all Ages of the Church, nor otherwise to be provided for.

And indeed it is hardly possible, that Provision could be made for the Decency and Order of Divine Administrations any other way, than by committing it to the Prudence and Discretion of the Governors in every National Church, to appoint those things; for the Modes and Expressions of Decency and Order, are infinitely different in several Countries, so that one thing shall be a signification of Reverence and Respect in the *Eastern* Part of the World, and a quite contrary in the *Western*; and the same Observances may not tend to Edification in one Age, even in the same Country, as in another; for the Humours of Men are extremely subject to change in this Matter, so that it was necessary the Appointment of meer Ceremonial and Circumstantial things, should be left to the Discretion of Church-Governors to order, or to alter, according to the Exigencies and Conditions of Time and Place. So that it appears to me to be sufficiently plain, that there has been a Power and Authority given by Christ to the Governors of the Church, to appoint such reasonable Circumstances, as they shall think fit, for the better Order and Decency of Divine Administrations, and the better Edification of the Souls of Men. And now,

II. The Appointment of Godfathers and Godmothers, a most useful Institution to the fore-said Purposes of Decency, Order, and Edification.

Secondly, I am to shew you, that their appointing of Godfathers and Godmothers, was a most excellent and useful Institution to this purpose, that is, that it is an appointment that contributes much to the decent Administration of Baptism; and it is also very serviceable to the Edification of the Baptized Members of Christ's Church.

How decent and orderly, and like to the transacting of a Covenant, it renders the administration of Baptism, I have already told you: But that it is very serviceable to the Edification of Persons Baptized, I will farther declare unto you. And this surely must needs be own'd, if we consider,

1. The Nature of their Office. And,

2. The good Effects we often see of Persons having had *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, as Sureties for 'em in their Baptism.

First, If we consider the Nature of their Office.

And, *First*, If we consider the Nature of their Office, how can we but expect from 'em a great deal of good, as to Persons Edification? For by the Nature of their Office, are they not Persons that are solemnly engag'd in the Presence of God, and of the whole Congregation then Assembl'd, and this to God himself, that they will take a special and particular Care of that Person then enter'd by their Means into the Society of Christians, that he shall be truly inform'd of the Nature of his Covenant, and what Obligations lye upon him to discharge those Duties contain'd in it, and which are to be perform'd on his Part, as he will expect to share in those unspeakable good things promis'd on God's part? And is not such a solemn Engagement to God, made by the Sureties in such a Presence, and in such a Place, and before such a number of Witnesses, likely to make Men careful to be as good as their Promise? And this if they shall be, and shall accordingly take care (if there be any occasion for it by the Parents neglect) to have the Child Catechis'd and Instructed in

in the Christian Religion, and shall Reprove him for his Miscarriages, and Exhort him to a circumspect walking with God, and never leave off till they have brought him at Years of Understanding before the chief Minister of Christ's Church, the Bishop, there solemnly and seriously to profess in his own Person, that he will do so and so, as they have engag'd in his Name: If this they shall do, is not this the likeliest way in the World to train up a Child in the Knowledge, and Love, and Fear of God, in which consists his Edification.

Why, the thing I suppose would be readily granted, that the Office being consider'd in itself, the Institution of *Godmothers* and *Godmothers* might be very useful to Peoples Edification, if *Sureties* would but take a due Care (if there should be occasion) of the Christian Edification and Conversation of such whom they have Engag'd for. We only want to see the good Effects of such their Undertaking, which (God knows say some) are but small; for who is it, say they, do we see take any care of any such thing? This is what is commonly urg'd against this Institution, by those who are not well-affected to this, nor any other Constitution of our Church; and as weak as this Exception is, many think it a sufficient Plea against having *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* in Baptism.

But I would desire such Persons to consider, that if the Abuse of any Ordinance, by Persons that are Profane and Careless, were a sufficient Reason against it, we must e'en abolish the Sacraments themselves; for how many are there who come unprepared, and unworthily partake of 'em, not regarding what Obligations they have laid upon themselves in the use of 'em, to be good Livers ever afterward; and the very Gospel it self, tho' a *Savour of Life unto Life*, unto some few, who live according to its Rules, is a *Savour of Death unto Death*, unto those (and they are the greatest number) unto whom it is Preach'd; and yet lead Lewd and Profligate Lives. But this is by Accident, and through Mens own Fault, that neither the Gospel can perswade, nor the Sacraments engage some Men to Obedience; and for that they must answer themselves, and both the Gospel and its Sacraments must notwithstanding be continued in the Church, for the good they are capable of Working, and the good they actually do effect to some few. And so ought the Institution of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*. In its own Nature its an Office fitted to do good, and tho' many do not that good they ought, under that Character, yet on the score of that good it may do, and those good Effects we really see it sometimes does do, it ought for that reason to be continued in the Church.

I say, Secondly, on the score of those good Effects we sometimes see it really does do; for this I am well assur'd of, and I have known my self many Instances of Persons, who owe that Understanding they have of Religion, and the fear of God, purely, next under God, to the Care of their *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, who have brought 'em up to Reading, bestow'd good Books upon 'em, given good Advice unto 'em, and caus'd 'em to be *Confirm'd*, when nothing of this would have been took Care of by their Careless, Loose, and Ignorant Parents. And I do not question, but amongst the many Neglects, there are Thousand of like Instances in the Nation, of Persons who

Secondly,  
Those good  
Effects of it.

have been happily brought up to a good understanding and sense of Religion, by the sole Care of their *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*. And then, I am sure, so precious is one Soul in the sight of God, that the Institution that shall contribute to the Salvation of many, shall be of no small account with him.

*Which good Effects would be much greater, were the choice of Godfathers and Godmothers made according to the Canons of the Church.*

And to the Edification of very many more, I am sure this Ordinance would contribute, if that choice were made of Persons for *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, which the Church prescribes. For as our most excellent Church has taken an admirable Care of her Children in providing Security for their good Education and Christian Behaviour; so to make that Security, as good as possible; and that they may be such as will be most likely to have that Care of those they stand for, she Ordains in her 24th Canon, "That no Persons should be admitted to be *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* to any Child at a Christening or Confirmation, before the said Person so undertaking hath received the Holy Communion. And now, if all Parents would provide such only, and all Ministers would receive none other but who have Communicated, then we should see much better effects of this Institution, and that it would Minister very considerably to Edification; for then the ungodly Crew, that never approach the Holy Altar, being excluded, there would none but Persons of a tolerable good sense of Religion themselves, be Sureties for others; and from such we might expect a discharge of their Obligations: But if Parents having other Respects than the good of their Childrens Souls, will only provide such as are likely to make the Infant a good Present, or leave it a Legacy, or bestow handsomely on Midwives and Nurses, let 'em be never so Loose, and Lewd, or mere Children, or otherwise unqualify'd, then no wonder if we see fewer good Effects of this excellent Institution, which in it self is admirably well fitted to promote Edification. But then this is the Fault of Parents, not of the Church; and notwithstanding this, the appointment of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, as Sureties in Baptism, ought to be consider'd as a thing of a very useful Tendency, as to the more decent Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, so to the better Edification of the Person Baptized; to which purpose, according to the Power given 'em by Christ, the Governours of our Church have appointed it.

*The Conclusion.*

And thus, in Commenting upon the *Preliminary Questions and Answers* of the Catechism, I have at length gone through all those Heads of Discourse, I did at first propose to speak to, in order to give you a full Understanding of the *Covenant of Grace*, that Covenant you enter'd into with God in your Baptism. For,

I. As to the Nature of this Covenant, I have, in the first place, explain'd to you the Terms and Conditions of it, both on Gods part, and on ours. In the second place, I have laid before you the Gracious Importance of this Covenant, shewing you how that it is a *State of Salvation*. Thirdly, I have accounted for the Original of it, and by whose Mediation you obtain'd such Terms of Reconciliation with God, and that it was through *Jesus Christ our Lord*. I have, Fourthly, acquainted you by whom, and how you have been Call'd

to



to this State of Salvation, that it was *Your Heavenly Father who hath called you to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And, Lastly, have Admonish'd you of the very great Reason you have to thank God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, for so exceeding great a Mercy, as his Calling you into it. So far I have let you into the Knowledge of the Nature of the Covenant of Grace. And,

II. Having done this, I have declar'd to you by what Sacrament or Solemnity you enter'd into it.

III. I have shew'd you the vast Obligations lying upon you faithfully to discharge your Covenant with God.

IV. I have directed you by what means you may perform it.

And, *Lastly*, That nothing might be wanting fully to Inform you in all that pertains to the Doctrine of this Covenant, I have now Inform'd you in those two Circumstances relating to your entrance into it, the *Time when*, and the *Persons by whom* you were Initiated therein.

These last Points indeed, I thought once to have deferr'd the treating upon, till I shall come to the Last Part of the Catechism. But tho' the whole Doctrine of Divine Assistance and Prayer, may be treated upon when I shall come to the Lord's-Prayer, and the Question which leads to it; yet as they are the necessary Means of enabling us to perform our Covenant with God, they ought at leastwise to be generally consider'd here. And even the Doctrine of *Infant Baptism*, and the *use of Godfathers and Godmothers*, tho' there is a Question and Answer more direct upon both at the latter end of the Catechism, yet the positive handling of 'em is properest in this place; And whatever Objections can be rais'd against either, will most naturally be handl'd upon these Words; *Why then are Infants Baptized, when by reason of their tender Age they cannot perform them?* The Answer to which is, *Because they Promise them both by their Sureties; which Promise when they come to Age themselves are bound to perform.* There is an Objection and Solution in these Words, and therefore they will be the fittest to found a Discourse upon, consisting of the like. However, I think the general Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace could not have been handl'd in all its Parts, without the consideration of these latter Points; and that, I think, may be sufficient to justify us in treating upon 'em here, so as to give you a general View, as of the *Covenant of Grace*, so of all that pertains to the Doctrine of it.

And now what remains, but that you seriously reflect upon all that has been deliver'd upon this most important Subject of your *Baptismal Covenant*? I do call it such, and I do think it ought to be the most studied by you of any other. For why? First, I take the Covenant of Grace, or our Baptismal Covenant, to comprise the whole Doctrine of Christianity, even all that, than which no Man

as a meer Christian is necessitated to know more, and than which the meaneſt ought not to know leſs. No Man in any Civil Contract can perform his Bonds, without knowing the Conditions of the Obligations: no more can a Chriſtian be ſuppos'd to perform his Covenant with God, without knowing the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of it. Secondly, It is abſolutely neceſſary that all Youth ſhould comprehend the general Nature, Terms, and Conditions of their *Baptiſmal Covenant*, before they go to be Confirm'd. Thirdly, And all Perſons before they communicate in the Holy Sacrament, becauſe in both theſe Ordinances they *ratifie* their Baptiſmal Covenant with God. Fourthly, And if it be conſider'd, that all Perſons, in order to prepare for Death, muſt ſtrictly examine themſelves, concerning their Failures in all, and every the Terms and Conditions requir'd on their part in their Baptiſmal Covenant: And laſtly, that at the Day of Judgment they will be juſtify'd, or condemn'd, according as they have perform'd, or not perform'd their Covenant with God: All this conſider'd, I think you would be ſenſible that there is nothing more fundamentally neceſſary for every Chriſtian, eſpecially for Youth to be acquainted withal, than the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of their Baptiſmal Covenant.

It is indeed the General Terms and Conditions only, that you have been hitherto inſtructed in, by this Expoſition upon the *Preliminary Questions and Answers*; and the more particular underſtanding of em, is to be given you in my ſucceeding Diſcourſes upon the *Catechiſm* and *Decalogue*. But the moſt uſeful Method of Inſtruction is to begin with Generals, and then to proceed to the Knowledge of Particulars. And that by both you may be render'd wiſe unto Salvation may God Almighty grant of his infinite Mercy through Jeſus Chriſt his Son, to whom, and the Holy Spirit, Three Perſons and One God, be all Honour, and Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion aſcribed both now, and for evermore. Amen.

*The End of the Firſt Volume.*

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*This he Endeavour'd to do in the Person of Abel. And when afterwards Recruited in the Family of Seth, yet he Reduc'd it again, by the Bloody Posterity of Cain, to Eight Persons in the Days of Noah. When after the Flood, God chose Abraham and his Posterity, to be a special People unto himself, Satan endeavour'd utterly to have Extinguish't that People, by his Servant Pharaoh. And in all Periods, till our Saviour's coming, he stir'd up the Idolatrous Nations, their Neighbours, especially the Four Monarchies, to Harass them. But soon after, that Christ appeared in the World, did he most vigorously Exert his Malice against it.* 108

*So that for the first 300 Years we hear of nothing but of bloody Persecutions. The Emperors of Rome the Instruments, but Satan the Instigator. And wheresoever any Attempt is made to Convert a Country from Paganism, he does instigate the Princes and People thereof, to Persecute and Destroy the Preachers of the Gospel. And he is no less Industrious to drive Christianity out of those Countries, whereof it had once Possession. And he has an Anti-Christian Party within the Bowels of Christendom, most sadly weakening Christ's, and most effectually promoting the Interest of his own Kingdom.* 109

*And now all Christians are so far to Renounce Satan, with respect to those his persecuting Temptations, as to submit to the sorest Sufferings, which Satan and his wicked Instruments can inflict, rather than deny Christ, or his Truths. Secondly, When those bloody* Method



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- Methods fail, Satan then does endeavour so to corrupt Mens Notions of God and Religion, that by their very Christianity they may dishonour him.* 110
- This Politick Methods of his, discover'd to us under the Parable of a malicious Enemy, coming privately in the Night, and sowing Tares where the Husbandman had before sowed good Seed. Like a skilful Husbandman he is choise about the Nature of the Seed, the Temper and Preparedness of the Soil, the Fitness of the Season, and the Skilfulness of the Seeds-man. First, As to the Nature of the Seed, he takes care his Heretical Opinions and Practices should bear some Resemblance of Divine Truth, in order to conceal their Discovery. Thus especially he Gilds his Errors, where the Light of the Gospel does most clearly shine, as here, First, When under the plausible Appearance of Advancing God's Honour, in some of his Attributes, he renders him odious and despis'd in Others.* 111
- Secondly, When under the Colour of Advancing Gospel-Truths, he propagates Heresies, which do undermine Religion, and the Necessity of a holy Life. Thirdly, When he teaches to prefer some eminent Christian Duty, or some part of a Duty, or one Way of performing a Duty, to the Disparagement of another. As to prefer Prayer, to the neglect of Preaching, or Sermons to the contempt of Prayer. As also Praying in Spirit, to the regard of Bodily Worship. And Extemporary Prayer, to the utter Contempt of Forms of Prayer.* 112
- By this latter Means, Satan has utterly Defeated those excellent Helps we have in our Church, and brought in a great Neglect of Publick, Family, and private Devotion.* 113
- Secondly, As to the Temper and Preparation of the Soil, in Churches where the Scriptures are Lockt up, and Ignorance prevails, he imposes the grossest Heresies, as Articles of Faith. Especially he introduces Idolatry and Superstition, whereby he is most immediately and directly serv'd. Thirdly, As to the fitness of the Season, he is dexterous in Accommodating his Counsels, his Actions, and his manner of Acting to such Seasons, as are most proper to his Purpose of seducing Mankind.* 114
- Hence in dark and ignorant Ages, nothing so common as the Apparitions of Saints, as was Pretended to introduce the Belief of Purgatory, Image-worship, and the like Superstitions. And in Learn'd and Philosophical Ages, he is as shy in appearing, lest he should destroy the prevailing Sadducism. Fourthly, As to the Skilfulness of the Seeds-man, Satan is wonderfully Cunning, in making choice of fit and proper Instruments; and in furnishing those with the proper Arts of Deceiving, and with suitable Qualities, whom he employs to sow the Seed of corrupt Doctrine in the Souls of Men.* 115
- Such as place all Religion in Morality, shall be adorned with Humanity. Such as turn it all into Mystery, shall be Gifted with Canting.* 116
- And yet sometimes the Crooked Serpent by Men seeming Godly, will propagate Principles extremely Immoral. The most difficult Part of a Christian's Warfare is to preserve One self untainted with Heretical Pravity, colour'd over with the Varnish of Gospel-Truth. But yet by Trying it by proper Rules it may be done, viz. First, By its Tendency to an ill Life. Secondly, By its taking off from our Dependance upon the Mediation of Christ, for the Acceptance of a good One.* 117

## LECT XII.

- Thirdly, Satan's great Industry is to gain over to his Party, or to Tempt to some scandalous Enormity such Persons as are more than ordinarily Eminent for their Rank, their Order, or their Piety in the Church. First, Such as are most Eminent for their Station or Quality.* 119
- Such Men's Wickedness, not altogether from the Temptingness of Riches, but the Industry of Satan, to get over such leading Men to his Party. Such Men's Examples, if bad, of malignant Influence, because Conspicuous. And will bring upon 'em the Guilt, not only of their own, but of other Men's Sins, because Their Actions have the force of a Precept, as well as of a Pattern, which Inferiours are afraid to shew their dislike of.* 120
- Great Men therefore must of all others Renounce the Temptations of Satan. Secondly, Such as are most Eminent on the account of their Order, viz. the Ministers of Religion. He is doubly Enrag'd against such, both because in the Nature and Design of their Office, they are to destroy his Kingdom, and because the rest of the World do altogether Eye them for their Pattern. Hence no Temptation left untried to withdraw such into some scandalous Enormity.* 121



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- And hence the more Industrious a Minister is, the more Industrious is Satan to overcome him And in the very way wherein he is most serviceable to the Church of God, Satan does endeavour to make him most Mischievous. As by turning his Zeal into Faction. His spiritual Mindfulness into Enthusiasm. If he cannot prevail over him by real Miscarriages, he will render him useless by forged Calumnies.* 122
- It wonderfully concerns the Interest of Religion, that the Reputation of its Ministers be kept unsullied. Hence Satan, and Satanical Men so Industrious to blast it. And slanderous Reports lessen the Authority and Influence of the Clergy almost as much as real Sin.* 123
- It behoves the Clergy therefore so far to Renounce and Resist the Devil's Temptations, as to take care not only to be really Blameless, but also to abstain from all appearance of Evil. Thirdly, Such as are signal for their extraordinary Piety and Vertue. Good Men the Devil knows, will be scandaliz'd at such a One's Fall. And the Atheistical will triumph therein. And withal the last Person will be rendered almost incapable ever after of Converting others by his Example, or Exhortations.* 124
- Against this Bulwark of Religion, therefore the Devil draws up all his Artillery. The Pride and Pains he takes in overcoming such a One, represented in a Parable.* 125
- The more Exemplarily Pious therefore any Man is, the more it concerns him to beware of the Devil, and all his Temptations.* 126

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- Lastly, what Temptations Satan levels against all Persons indifferently consider'd. The Devil's Temptations not easily known to be his, nor always distinguishable from those of the World, and the Flesh, which are manag'd and directed by him.* 127
- Some of the most considerable of his Methods of Tempting us discovered. First, He permits, if not furthers some in a partial Obedience to God in some Particulars, the better to detain them perfect Slaves to himself in others. This a most fatal Delusion, when some Sins only of a scandalous Name, are exchanged for contrary Vertues, but with the Retention of Impieties of a higher Nature.* 128
- Such the most Irreclaimable of all Sinners. Secondly, By putting plausible Names upon the worst of Sins, under that disguise he does cheat Persons into a good Opinion of 'em, and then to commit 'em. Sin in that disguise gets Reputation amongst Men.* 129
- Thirdly, By changing the Nature of several Divine Graces, so that they degenerate into very great Sins. Sins thus mistaken are seldom Repented of. Fourthly, By putting Novices upon undertaking Severities, greater than they can go thro' with, on design that when they grow weary thereof, they may together with those their voluntary Severities, throw all Religion aside, as too Burdensome, and not at all Practicable.* 130
- The difference between God's Ordering, and the Devil's Management of Men in these Matters. Fifthly, By injecting of evil Thoughts into our Minds at our Devotion, to unhallow those Services, whereby we do really and most immediately glorify God, and benefit our own Souls.* 131
- And thus he hinders the Efficacy of the Word. Sixthly, The Devil observing the outward Wants and Necessities of Persons, he accordingly Tempts them, by the use of unlawful Means, to remove those Evils. Seventhly, Knowing every particular Person's inward Dispositions, he accordingly presents such Objects to the Fancy, as shall be likeliest to prevail over such a Man to commit some grievous Sin.* 132
- Eighthly, Above all, by Representing to the Fancies of Men, the Conveniency of Riches, the Glory of Honours, and the Sweetness of Pleasures, he does thereby Bribe 'em to Rebel against God, and to Sin against their own Souls. In his Representation of this World's Goods, he shews only the fair Out-side to allure into Sin, industriously concealing all that is Hurtful therein, and would deter Men from it.* 133
- Ninthly, Having prevail'd thereby upon Persons, to commit some grievous Sin to obtain them, he then lays the shame and disgrace of their Sins before 'em, perswading 'em to commit another horrid Wickedness, to hide from the Eyes of Men, the shame of the former.* 134
- Tenthly, Having once Engag'd a Person into many Sins, he either lulls him in Security, or drives him into Despair. Lastly, There are those, whom God does in a great measure give up to the Delusions of Satan, others whom he does wholly Abandon to the Power of the Devil. First, Such ill-dispos'd Minds, as out of love to their Lusts, seek after such* Princi-

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- Principles and Teachers; as will make Sin easy to their Consciences, are justly left to the Delusions of Satan. Secondly, Such as by a long Course of many damning Sins have laid wast the Conscience, and have baffled all the Methods of God's Grace to Reclaim 'em, these are sometimes, even in this Life, abandon'd by God, to be acted by the Devil.* 135
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- What it is, and how we must Renounce this great Work of the Devil, his Tempting of us to Sin.* 137
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- Secondly, As opposite to Passion. Secondly, Watchful over those our Weaknesses especially where Satan will be likeliest to Attempt us. And Thirdly, we must be constant and fervent in Prayer to God, to Protect us from them.* 139

## L E C T. XIV.

- What is meant by the Poms and Vanity of the wicked World, and in what sence, and how far we must Renounce the wicked World, with its Poms and Vanity. Three things here to be Explain'd, and accordingly Renounc'd: 1. The World; 2. The wicked World; and 3. The Poms and Vanity of this wicked World. The World a great Enemy to God's Glory, and our own Happiness.* 141
- It is to be consider'd both Generally and Particularly. First, By the World in general is meant that whole Frame of Nature, which we behold, and all that variety of Creatures which it contains, and is given us by the Bounty and Goodness of God, for our Use and Benefit. The World in this sence is not in it self Evil, but only accidentally, by Man's Abuse of himself, or it.* 142
- Consider'd in it self it is very Good, and convenient to us. And as it is not absolutely in it self Evil, so neither is it entirely to be Renounced; but being Good in it self, it may in some measure be desir'd and enjoy'd by us. Nevertheless through our own Corruption, whereby we abuse the good Things of the World, it becomes accidentally the occasion of most of our Sins, and of our Estrangement from God, our Sovereign Good. How the World becomes so.* 143
- In what manner it does Captivate us, and draws us from God. So far therefore as it engages our Affections too closely to it, so as to make us Inordinately, and Irregularly to mind it, and to neglect our great Concern, the Business of Religion, it is to be Renounced and Rejected by us. So long as we wear these Earthly Bodies about us, we are permitted the Use and Enjoyment of worldly Things, provided in Things lawful, and in Degrees allowable. But being our Souls, our principal Part, are soon to remove to Heaven, we must chiefly set our Affections on things Above, and mainly endeavour to attain 'em.* 144
- Secondly, Concerning the World, consider'd in its Particulars, and those Temptations result both from the Good, and the Evils thereof. The good Things of this World, Riches, Honours and Pleasures; the Evils, Poverty, Disgrace, and Afflictions. And Things of a middle Nature are the different Callings, Conditions, and Cares of this World. First, As to Riches, these are not in themselves Hurtful, but Good, and are bestowed upon us to good Ends and Purposes. And those who enjoy 'em, have great Advantages of doing Good therewith, to others Comfort, and the Benefit of their own Souls. Nevertheless Riches are a mighty Temptation, whether we consider Men as Getting, Possessing, or as Parting with, or Losing of them.* 145
- First, In the over-eager Pursuit of Riches Men do run themselves into many grievous Sins. As also into many miserable Snares, so as to be hardly ever able to disentangle themselves out of 'em. For as Restitution is necessary to Peace with God, so it is extremely difficult to be willing, or able afterwards to make.* 146
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Secondly, And no less Temptations are those subject to, who do possess 'em. In the Possession of Riches, Men are Tempted to the highest Offences against God, their Neighbour, and Themselves. But lastly, the great Sins of all are occasion'd by a Lothness to part with, and a Fear of losing 'em. 147

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Particularly not by Sacrilege. Whoever has unjustly gain'd any thing, must renounce it, by making Restitution thereof. Secondly, Riches consider'd in the Possession, are to be renounced, by paring off those Superfluities, which tempt Idleness and Luxury, Pride and Insolence, and an Idolatrous Trust in Riches; and by bestowing it to Pious and Charitable Uses. 150

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Such a One is bound above others to be a strict and orderly Liver, and upon his Failure, is more open to Reproof, and more liable to be severely Punished. Secondly, As also that which exalts Persons above their Brethren, to that degree, as to despise and oppress the rest of Mankind, as if they were but a lower Rank of Creatures, and had not the same God to their Father, Bodies Form'd out of the same Clay, and Souls as Excellent in their Natures, and as capable of Improvements; as precious in God's sight, and as much the Heirs of Heaven, as their own. 155

Thirdly, Such ought even to Renounce all Pretensions to Honour, who have degenerated from those worthy Qualities, which Ennobled their Ancestors. 156

This is the Determination of our Saviour, and his Apostles, in their Case. Lastly, And such ought to Renounce all Pretensions to Honour, amongst Christians at least-wise, who despise Religion, and its chiefest Vertues, as Qualities beneath 'em. But if such are accounted Honourable by vain Men, they are Despicable in the Eyes, both of God, and of all Wise and Good Men. 157

The Summ how far Paternal Honour is to be Renounced. Secondly, In what Sence, and how far Civil Honour is to be Renounced; whether the Favour of Princes, or the Effects of their Favour, Posits of Honour. 158

These kind of Honours and outward Glories, are dazzling and bewitching Things. But First, A Prince's Favour, tho' extremely Valuable, when it can be had without Sin, yet no Man must gain, possess, or retain it by wicked Arts, or sinful Compliances. Nor Secondly, the Effects of their Favours, high Places, and Titles of Honour. First, In the obtaining of these, no Man must grasp at that, which is above his Capacities and Abilities to manage to the Publick Good. 159

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